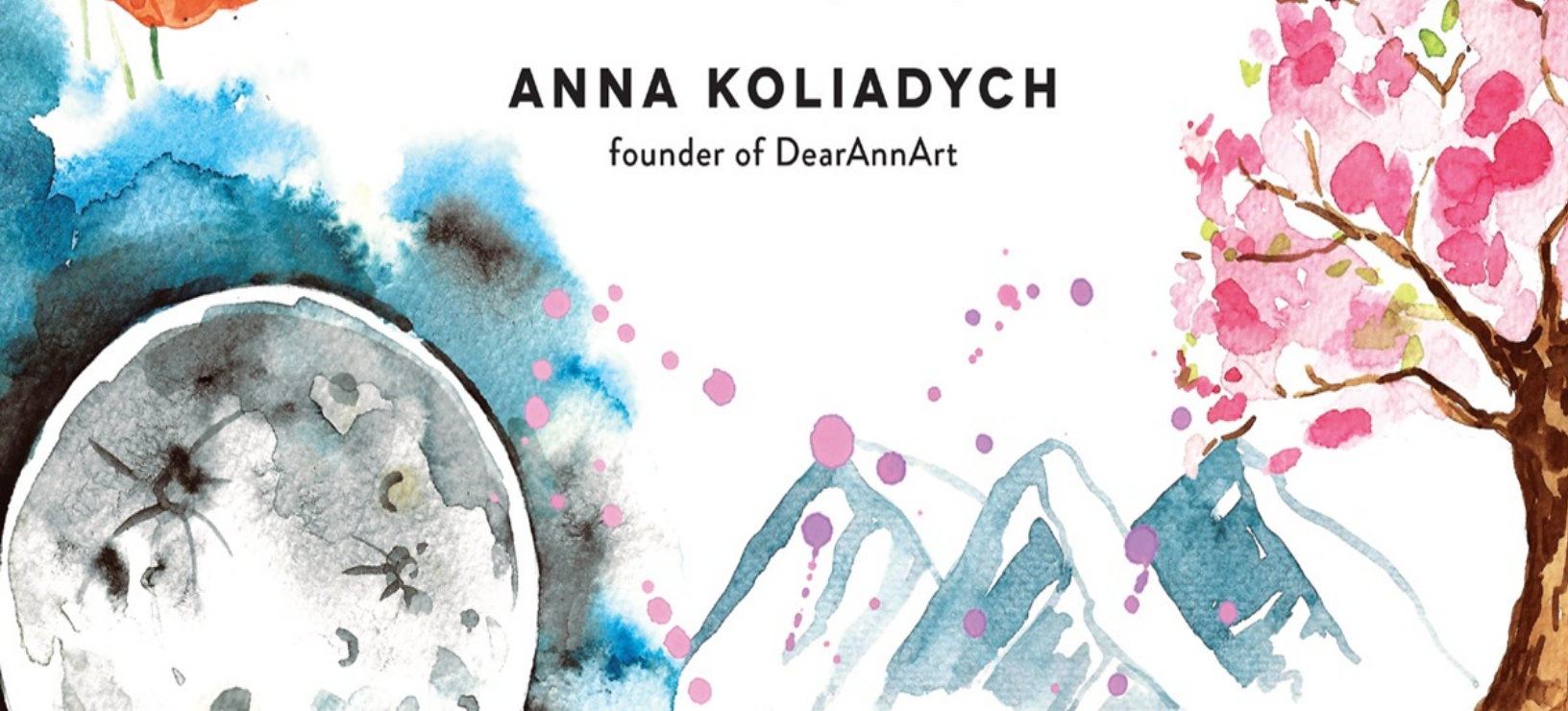


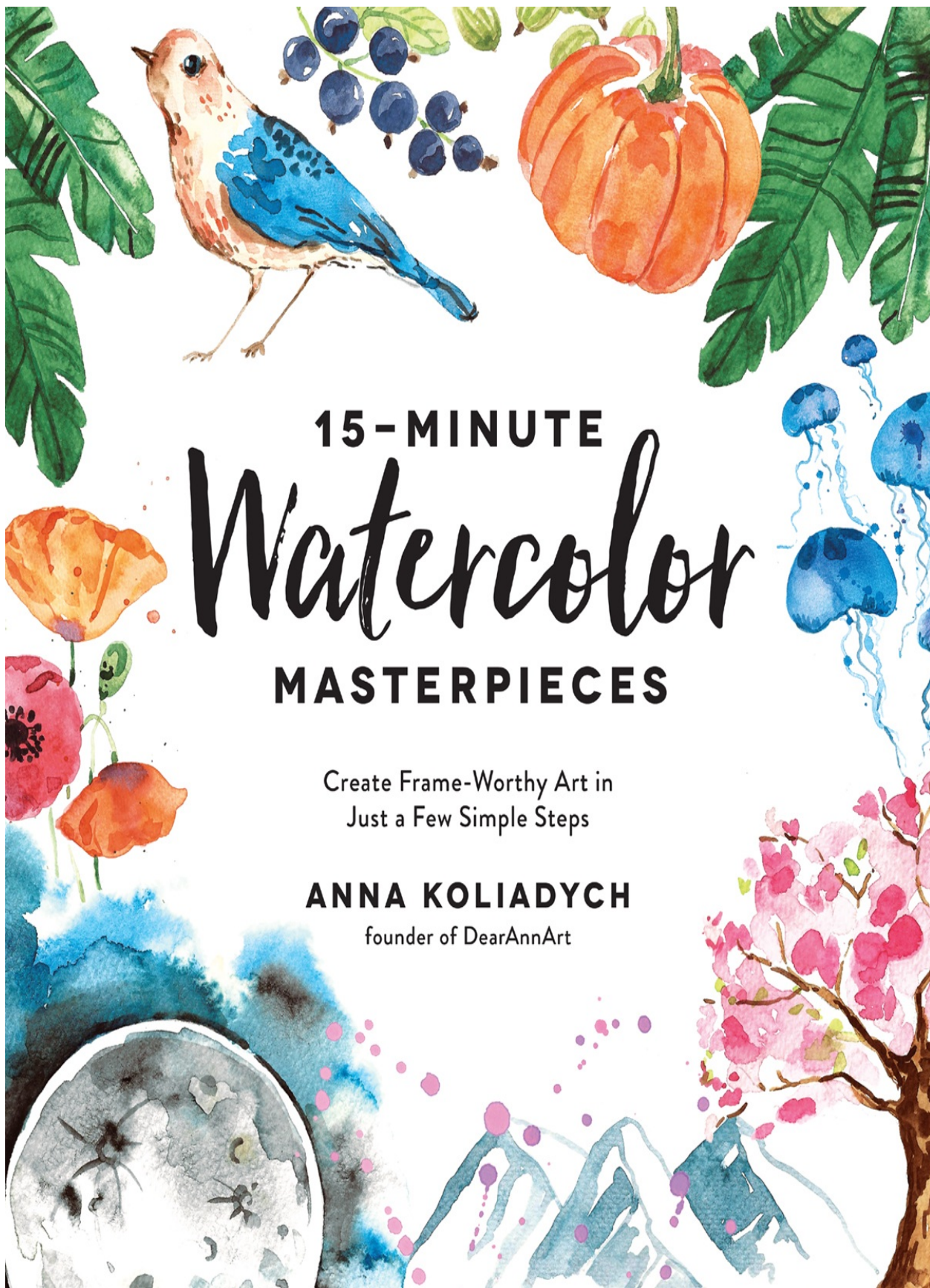
15-MINUTE
Watercolor
MASTERPIECES

Create Frame-Worthy Art in
Just a Few Simple Steps

ANNA KOLIADYCH

founder of DearAnnArt





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**TO MY FATHER, PAVEL KOLIADYCH, WHO TAUGHT ME HOW TO
SMILE.**

INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is Anna! I am an illustrator and watercolor artist. I can truly say that painting is my passion in life.

I always say that watercolor is a magical and unique medium. If you begin this journey with this wonderful medium, you will see how fun it can be.

The key to painting with watercolors is practice and consistency. Watercolor can sometimes require patience, but even for a beginner, it's easy to get the hang of it. I'm a real example of this. Though I did some painting as a child, I started to use watercolors professionally only four years ago. It is a great way to do quick paintings and sketches. It's full of freedom in regard to color and lines, and you can also create nice effects and textures.

This book focuses on painting quickly with watercolors. I call this “15-minute painting” because each project will take you only 15 minutes. Since I started teaching watercolor, I've noticed that my students usually can't practice daily, as most of them are too busy with work, family or housework. What to do? If you are busy but still want to paint, then the solution is quick painting sessions. Here you will find different projects, lessons and exercises with one aim—practicing and learning watercolor in just 15 minutes a day. A thousand people on Instagram have already practiced my methods and started to paint with watercolors daily, opening their creativity and improving their skills. I hope you will also find 15-minute painting sessions useful and allow yourself to unleash your creative spirit.

HOW TO WORK WITH THIS BOOK

This book is very easy to work with. The first part includes the basics that you need to know to start painting with watercolors. I've tried to

keep all explanations clear and simple—only important information, no fluff at all. The second part is filled with ways to practice your skills—fifty original projects that take just 15 minutes. I divided them all into chapters that each focus on a different subject, and in each chapter, the projects are sorted from the simplest to the most complicated.

Each project contains a step-by-step lesson and detailed description. I've also included color theory and technique chapters.

I recommend you choose a project each day and vary the lessons according to your mood. It's better to go from simple tasks to more difficult ones. Try to pick projects by following your heart.

Believe in yourself; enjoy the process; have fun; experiment with colors, shapes and compositions; and feel and listen to yourself. Most importantly, love what you do!

With love,

—Anna

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Anna', followed by a short horizontal line.

WATERCOLOR TECHNIQUES AND EXERCISES

WATER BALANCE

If you are new to watercolor, the most difficult thing for you may be getting the balance between water and color pigment right to make different consistencies of paint.

With each color you can get three (or even more) different shades: transparent, medium and very rich. The whole point is that the more water you add to the paint, the more transparent the shade will be on paper.

I will show you an exercise that will help you understand how it works.

Before we start, let's **prepare your watercolors**. If your watercolor set has pans, you need to add a few drops of water in each of them before you start to paint.

For watercolors in tubes, squeeze a little bit of paint on a palette or a plate, then add a few drops of water.

To start, we'll work with one color. Add a little water to the color you choose—enough for the brush to move easily across the surface of the palette. The brush should not be dry. NOTE: For all of the techniques mentioned here, with the exception of the dry brush technique, your brush should always be wet before adding paint to the brush.

Now paint a shape (for the example, I chose a circle). You should get a very rich and deep color. This is the first shade. For the next shade, add some more water to the paint on the palette or into the pans and paint

another shape. You should get a more transparent shade, and the consistency of the paint should be thinner than in the previous stage. Then add even more water to the paint on the palette and paint the shape again. Keep adding water and painting shapes until you reach a shape with a transparent tint.

You'll have to practice to understand how much water you need to add to a paint to make very rich, medium and transparent consistencies. With time, you will get a feel for when you've added enough water and obtained your desired consistency.



More
Water



More
Water



More
Water



More
Water



Figure 1

Round Brush No. 8



Round Brush No. 3



Figure 2

BRUSH STROKES

Brush strokes may seem difficult at first, but taking some time to practice them will save you a lot of time in the future. So, prepare your brushes, and let's figure out how to use them properly.

I remember how scary using the brushes seemed when I started painting with watercolors. I thought that there was nothing more complicated. But with lots of practice, I gradually mastered working with all kinds of brushes, and now I love using all types.

Brushes, if used correctly, help make the painting process very easy.

Let's begin with my favorite round brushes: a size 8 brush, which is a large brush, and a size 3, which is a small brush. If you are a beginner, then these two brushes are all you need to paint the projects in this book.

Figure 2 shows examples of lines painted by the brushes. The pink lines are painted by the size 3 brush and the red by the size 8 brush.



Figure 3

The very first line in each column was made with the brush held vertically above the paper, so that only the tip of the brush touched it. As you can see, the lines are pretty thin. Next I sloped the brush to the paper a little and painted another stroke. This time the line is thicker. The very last stroke was made with the brush practically lying flat on the paper. This line is the thickest.

Note that since the size 8 brush is wider it can create more diverse lines.

In addition to lines of different thicknesses, round brushes can create beautiful strokes with just one motion (see figure 2).

Let's try it. Take the size 8 brush with any color on it, press it to the paper, then move it forward a little on the surface of the paper and lift it up. Repeat this exercise with the size 3 brush. The more you move the brush, the longer the stroke will be. In addition, you can change the angle of the brush to make differently shaped lines. Using this single-movement technique, you can create flower petals, leaves and blades of grass.

You can create many types of strokes and shapes using these brush

strokes and others with different kinds of brushes—like the flat brush, detail brush, mop brush and angle brush (see figure 3).

Remember that you do not need to apply a lot of pressure to create a beautiful shape. Just one focused movement of the brush will do. For each type of brush you work with, also remember that the brush's angle toward paper is very important. It also matters how much the brush touches the paper and which direction you move it.

All of these factors influence the shapes you paint.

Do not be afraid to experiment with brushes, and practice as often as possible. Also practice for a few minutes before every painting session as a warm-up.

CONTRAST IN TWO WAYS

A painting's contrast is very important. How much contrast your work has depends on how much you incorporate different colors to add interest for the viewer.

This strawberry exercise will help you understand exactly how contrast works and give you practice making contrast in two ways.

First, paint two strawberry shapes with red. For the first shape, use a watery red; for the second, use a very thick and saturated red. Let the paint dry completely, then add seeds to both berries. Use a rich, thick red paint for the first strawberry and a white gel pen for the second.

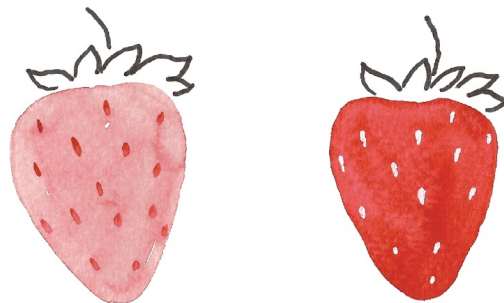


Figure 4

In both cases, you get a great contrast between the strawberries and seeds. But if you swap the seed colors, the contrast will be lost and the illustrations will look unclear and muddy. White is not visible on transparent red, nor is dark red visible on red. Their shades and consistencies are too similar.

Remember these points when you work any project, and always try to make your work's colors pop.

COLOR THEORY

Color theory is an essential part of all painting, and I can't leave it out. Of course, the following information is just a drop in the ocean, so I recommend you learn the science of color in much more detail. For now, I will explain some basic principles that will help you feel more confident when choosing colors and mixing them, especially if you are a beginner.

Let's get started with the **color wheel**.

The color wheel is a circle containing twelve hues arranged according to their relationship with one another. It is divided into three main color groups.

The **primary colors** are red, blue and yellow. The group is called "primary" because no other colors can be mixed to create these colors.

The **secondary colors** are orange, purple and green. They're made by mixing equal amounts of two primary colors.

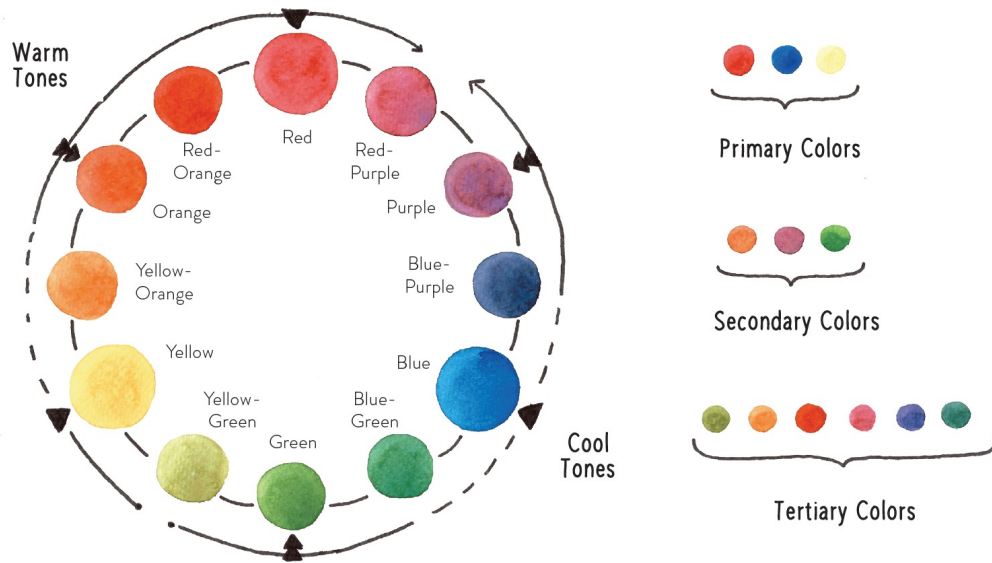


Figure 5

The **tertiary colors** consist of six shades: yellow-green, yellow-orange, red-orange, red-purple, blue-purple and blue-green. They are made by mixing a secondary color with a primary color.

So, in theory, you need just three primary colors to create any palette. (For more on how to mix colors, see figures 5 and 6.)

Another important point from color theory is the idea of **warm and cool tones**. The warm tones are the reds, oranges and yellows. They bring warm vibes to a painting.

The cool tones are greens, blues and purples. They add some freshness to a work.

Yellow-green and red-purple are in-between tones and can be used as both warm and cool tones.

COLOR MIXING

Mixing colors is a very important skill that can be learned with practice. Here are several exercises that will help you to understand how colors blend.

The color chart is the first exercise. It will help you to understand the shades that are in your set of watercolor paints.

With a pencil, draw a table for the colors. Now, without mixing them, fill the table's first column with the paints in your watercolor set. Next fill the first row with the same colors in the same sequence you did for the first column. All shades should be of medium consistency (read more about paint consistencies [here](#)). Now fill in the chart with new tints by painting in each box a mix of the colors in its corresponding first row and first column. For all shades, try to keep a medium consistency. Also try to mix the colors in equal proportions.

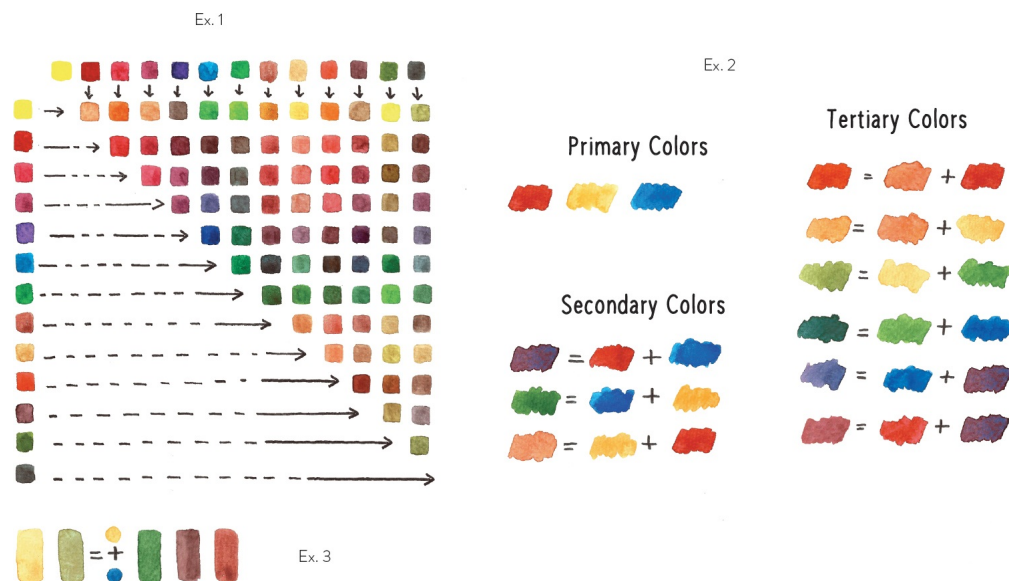


Figure 6

Another very useful exercise is to mix primary colors to get secondary and tertiary tints (see exercise 2). This is how the **color wheel** works in practice.

So, first prepare the primary colors. Now mix two primary colors in equal proportions, then mix the other two primary-color combinations. You will get three secondary colors.

As I mentioned earlier [here](#), tertiary colors are made by mixing primary and secondary colors. So, mix the matching color pairs in equal

proportions to get another six shades.

The final exercise will be making **color swatches**. I advise that before painting any object, you prepare the colors you need for it, both the pure tints and the mixes. So, prepare a few colors, then put them all on one swatch.

An example of a color swatch is shown in exercise 3.

WATERCOLOR TECHNIQUES

Here I will explain some techniques that are usually used in watercolor painting. Knowing these techniques will help you feel more confident with watercolor painting as well as use this book effectively.

I recommend you practice each of these techniques before starting on the projects. Of course, they aren't the only techniques in watercolor painting, but they are the most basic and the ones I use most often and created the projects in this book with. If you encounter other techniques, try them out as well. The more skills you have, the more freedom you can give your creativity.

Note that the techniques I mention here may be named differently in other sources.

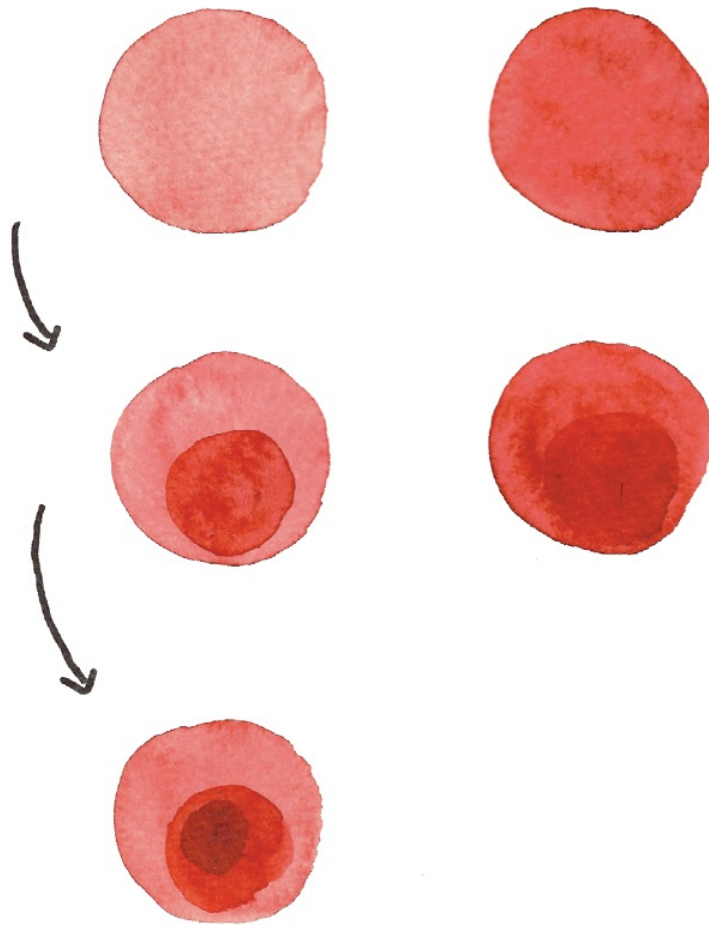


Figure 7



Figure 8

LAYERING

The first technique is **layering**.

Layering is one of the basic techniques in watercolor painting and is used all the time. It consists of two rules:

- The previous layer of paint must be dry before adding another layer.
- Always start a work with its most transparent layer.

What does this mean and how do we use these rules in practice? Let's see!

Paint a circle with any color, then add one more circle beside it with the same color but in a thicker, more saturated tint.

Now apply the first rule of the layering technique. Dry this first painted layer with a blow dryer or wait until it is dry. After that, paint another shape over each circle with the same colors and consistencies (circles are fine).

In both cases, the second layer overlaps the first. But note that in the first circle, the transparency is preserved. In the second one, the transparency is no longer there, meaning it would be difficult to paint something visible over the layer.

If a previous layer is lighter, you have the chance to add more and more layers over it, which allows your work to contain a wide variety of shades. This is the second layering rule in action.

After the layers dry, you can paint another shape (a third layer) on the first circle since its transparency allows you.

You can add as many layers as you like to a painting, but remember to follow the technique's rules. Layering works with any color or shade (see figure 8), so feel free to try it with others.

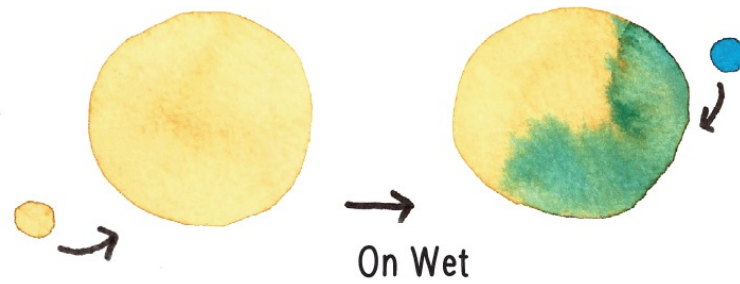


Figure 9

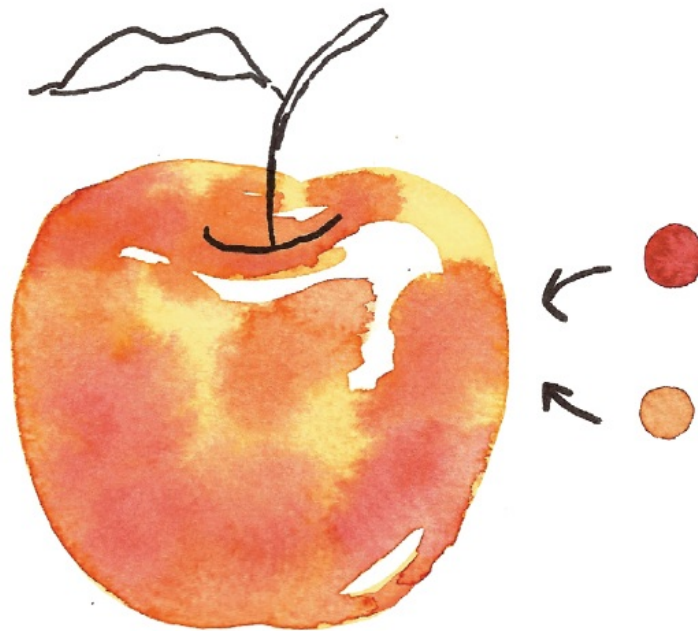


Figure 10

BLENDING

The second technique is **blending**.

Pick any color and make a circle. (It can be any shape, really, but I prefer to practice with a circle.)

TIP: Always test your brush before you paint something or when you start with a new color to be sure your paint is the right color and consistency.

On top of the still-wet layer, add a new color. Just a few touches with your brush will be enough. You can see how the colors should blend inside this small shape in figure 9.

This technique is very common. You can use it whenever you want to show a beautiful transition or distribution of color. For example, if you paint an apple (see figure 10), you can use yellow as a base and then add a bit of orange and red on the still-wet base. This will create a beautifully blended color.

Only watercolors can blend colors naturally and directly on paper like this.

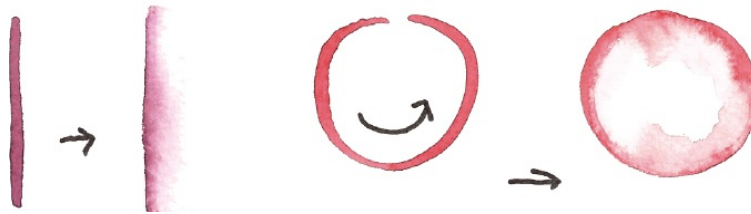


Figure 11



Figure 12

SOFTENING

The next technique is **softening**.

Let's figure out how to do it! Choose any color from your palette and paint a line. Using a clean brush, blur the line from one side with water.

Now repeat this step, but this time try it with a circle instead of a line.

I use softening often. It gives me the ability to create a nice, neat line on one side of a shape or brush stroke while blurring the other side.

For example, the base for the lemon painting above was created using the softening technique.

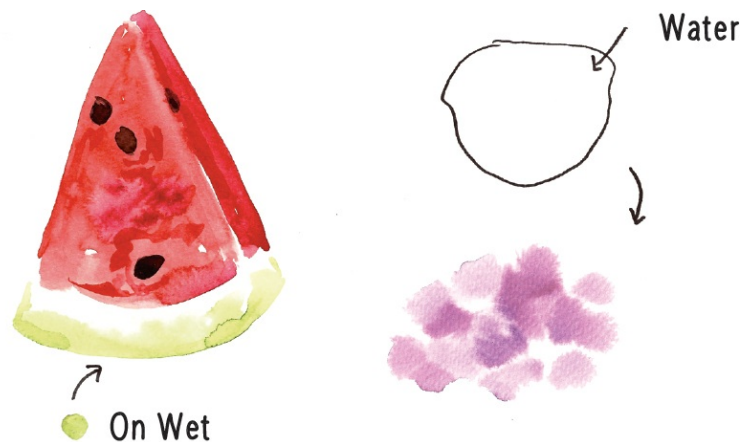


Figure 13

ON WET

The next technique is **on wet** (it may also be referred to as “**wet on wet**” or “**painting on wet**”).

It is similar to blending, but instead of using color for the first layer, you'll use clean water.

It's very simple: wash your paper with clean water, add a little paint to

this wet layer, and let the paint spread itself over the wet paper. Done.

This is a frequently used technique. It's appropriate whenever the watercolors need to spread on the wet paper very beautifully and evenly.

For example, if you're painting a slice of watermelon, you can apply this technique when painting the green rind, as in figure 13. (The red, juicy part of the watermelon was painted on dry paper.)

As you can see, the rind looks very natural. You can't create this effect with other watercolor techniques.

Always ask yourself which technique is best for each of your layers. You can also experiment with a few techniques for a layer, then choose which one you think is best for your piece.

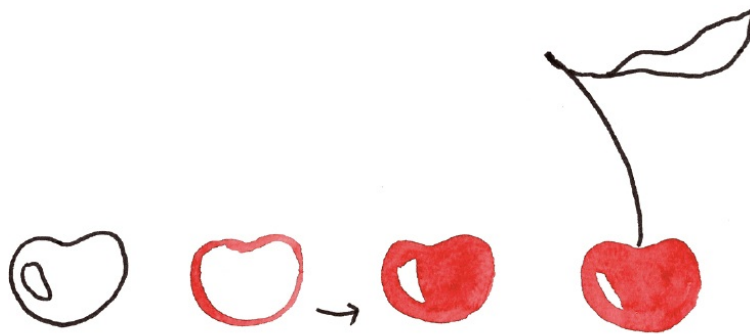


Figure 14

RESERVING

The **reserving** technique consists of leaving certain areas of the paper free from paint. The area is determined in advance (it may be several sections of a layer), and it intentionally will not be filled with paint.

Let's see how it works. Paint a circle, then think about where you don't want the paint to go. Fill the circle with paint (for example, red) except for a defined space that you leave free of paint. Does this object remind you of anything? Of course: it will look like a cherry if you finish the

shape and perhaps add some details. This technique is often used to paint highlights or reflections. The white space roughly imitates them. Look at how effective it is in practice in figure 14. The cherry looks nice already with only one layer.

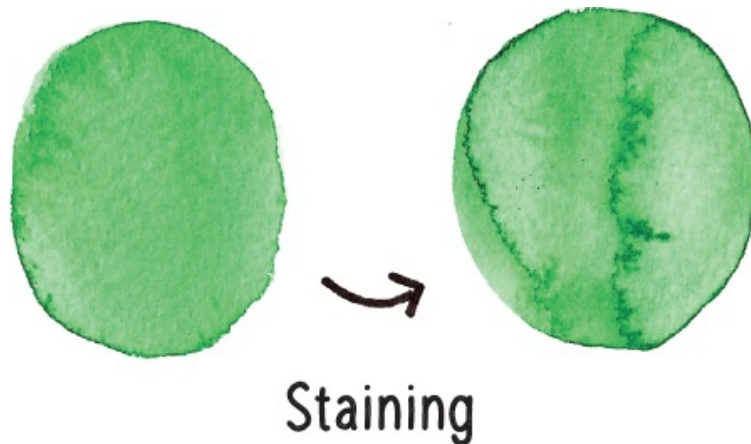


Figure 15



Figure 16

USING WATER DROPLETS

Water droplets aren't often used in watercolor painting, but sometimes I like to include them in my projects.

To understand how they work, first paint a shape with any color. Now clean your brush, but make sure it's still wet. Add a few drops of water to the still-wet shape by gently touching your brush to the paper.

The drops will make “stains,” enhancing the effect of blending paint with water. It's useful in those cases when you need to make a painting look less perfect and more natural.

SPLATTERING

Splattering is a very creative technique, and you can use it for those works you want to add freshness, freedom and ease to. It is not suitable for all paintings, but sometimes drops of paint are a perfect final touch.

Splattered drops can be large or small, depending on the size of the brush you use. Just take a little pigment on the brush and flick it on the dry painting. Do not be afraid to add splatters—they make a work fun and lively. The technique is also perfect for adding stars to a dark sky with white gouache.



Figure 17

DRY BRUSH

The **dry brush** technique isn't common in watercolor painting, but I personally love to use it for food paintings and fashion illustrations.

So, what is this technique? The name "dry brush" is mostly self-explanatory, but there is a small nuance you should know about. The brush actually isn't absolutely dry. Instead you should moisten it with water then remove most of the moisture by wiping the brush with a paper towel. Next take some paint in your desired consistency on the brush and paint a few lines on the paper. Round and flat brushes work best for this technique, and you should be sure to prepare your paint in advance.

For a better understanding of how this technique works, paint several types of lines and outline some simple objects. As you'll see, lines made with an almost-dry brush are very textured and broken in some places. This type of line is the opposite of the typical smooth lines of watercolors, making it a great way to accent or emphasize parts of a painting.



BEAUTIFUL *Landscapes*

Some may think that painting landscapes is quite difficult, but even a beginner can paint a simple and uncomplicated one in only 15 minutes. In this chapter, I have gathered easy lessons for painting a variety of scenes inspired by nature, starting with a beautiful sketch of the sky with wispy clouds ([here](#)) and ending with a picture of the fascinating underwater world ([here](#)). Despite their simplicity, the projects in this chapter are beautiful watercolor sketches that look quite impressive and professional. All the lessons are divided into simple steps and will not take much of your time.

I hope you will like painting landscapes as much as I do! Who knows? You may want to delve into the subject and specialize in creating landscapes inspired by nature.

Cloudy Sky



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 5 or 6
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape
- Paper napkin

PROJECT COLORS



Ultramarine blue



Cerulean blue

Paintings and illustrations of dramatic, cloudy skies can look so romantic, and the sky is definitely a majestic part of any landscape painting or street sketch.

A skill like painting the sky will come in handy on numerous occasions, and I am sure that you will grow to love painting it as much as I do.

At first glance, painting the sky is very simple. It really is. Especially with watercolors. Piece together several small, consecutive steps, and soon you will have created a true masterpiece within 15 minutes or even less.

But without much experience, it may be harder than it seems, and you might get frustrated trying to make your sky look just right. In this lesson, I will share with you some secrets and top tips for making the painting process interesting, easy and inspiring.

So let's get to it!

NOTE: You should work quickly and efficiently without pauses between stages since watercolor paint dries quickly. Read all the instructions completely, then break into painting.

TIP: If you don't have these two exact tints, use any two other shades of blue you have in your watercolor set. They will work too and make a unique design!

STEP 1



Step 1

Define your work area in one of the following ways:

- using masking tape
- drawing a rectangle or square with a pencil
- creating an abstract rectangular shape that does not require a preliminary draft

I've chosen the third option because, in my opinion, such a free and abstract shape makes the painting charming, but choose whichever you feel most comfortable with. In any case, I advise you to secure the paper with masking tape before painting because we will be using the on-wet technique (read about painting on wet [here](#)).

So, wash the paper with clean water, but make sure not to use too much, just enough to apply paint to a wet surface.

Now, using a medium round brush (size 5 or 6), add ultramarine blue to the upper part of the painting area with slight movements of the brush. The consistency of the paint should be medium (for more about paint consistency, see [here](#)).

When you paint on the wet layer, the paint will spread itself over the

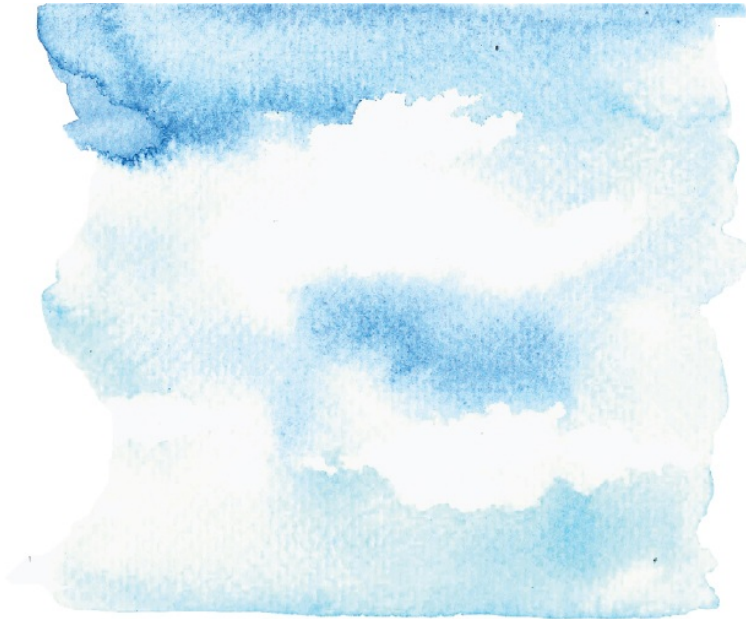
paper and create a beautiful image. Don't make unnecessary movements with the brush; one or two small strokes are enough. In fact, let the paint flow and move where it wants to create a more natural picture.

Now add cerulean blue to the bottom of your painting using the same method as before. You'll end up with a sky without clouds.

TIP: Leave some areas empty, with no paint, so that you don't have to dab away as much later.

If there is too much water in your picture, remove the excess water with a dry brush.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now it's time to add clouds to the sky. Take a clean paper napkin and press it to spots on the still-wet layer to remove some of the paint. You should start to see some clouds emerge.

Even if not all of the paint comes off where you press, it will still look

very natural. Make sure not to overdo the dabbing. It's best if the napkin does not have sharp edges so that you create rounded shapes.

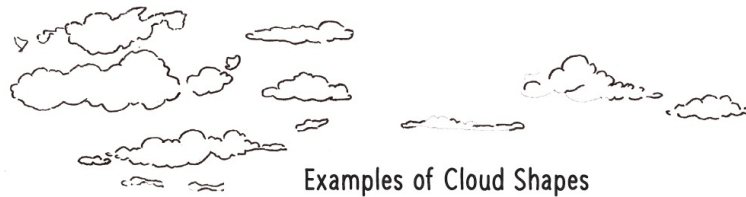


Figure 1

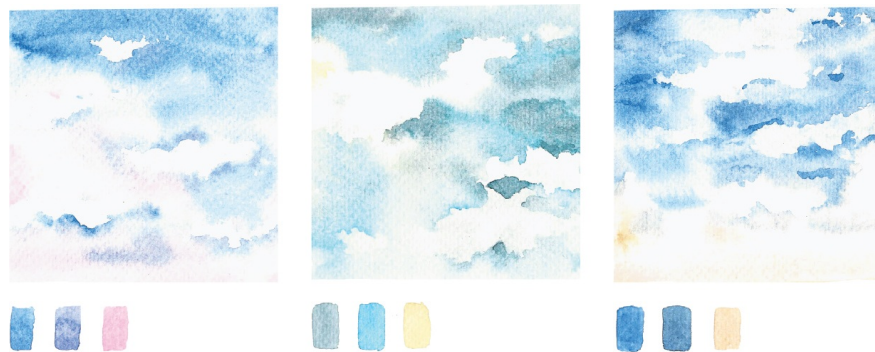


Figure 2

TIP: The napkin should not be too soft, otherwise it will soak up the paint too quickly, but it should also not be too hard, as it may damage the painting.

In figure 1 there are several examples of the same type of clouds.

In real life, you see many different types of clouds, so experiment and practice with shapes and types of clouds until you find a type you are happy with.

STEP 3



Step 3

Using a small round brush (size 2 or 3), begin adding paint to the still-wet layer from the outer edges of the clouds. Use both tints of blue for this. Apply paint randomly, without any order.

And ... voilà! Your painting is done!

Using this lesson's principles, you can create a whole variety of paintings of the sky. Figure 2 shows a few paintings that were made by following this lesson, but with different color combinations.

Just by going outside and seeing the beautiful sky, you can inspire yourself to discover more cloud shapes and create ever more stunning sky masterpieces. If you like, take pictures of the sky to use as references when you are painting.

Don't worry if things don't go perfectly on your first try; it can take time to precisely fine tune your skills. But sky paintings always look beautiful, so relax and enjoy the process. This project is an excellent opportunity to really practice using watercolor paints.

Mysterious Forest



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Compass, or any round object

TIP: If you want to paint something freestyle but at the same time would like it to look professional, then paint it inside a circle.

Nature inspires us. Some people like to travel and explore different landscapes, while others use photos of nature to influence and enhance their artistic pursuits. With watercolors, we can easily portray the genuine beauty of our planet.

This project is a mysterious forest painting. It creates a very magical and

impressive landscape but is still very simple. I encourage you to paint the landscape inside a circle to give it more structure. The project does not require any specific skills, and you can even do it with kids.

So let's start our journey!

PROJECT COLORS



Light blue



Emerald blue



Tint of green



Black-blue

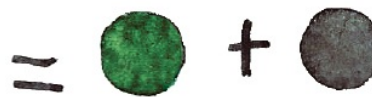
COLOR MIXING



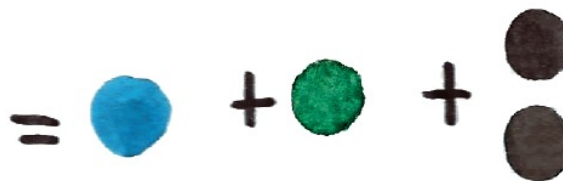
Emerald blue



Tint of green



Black-blue



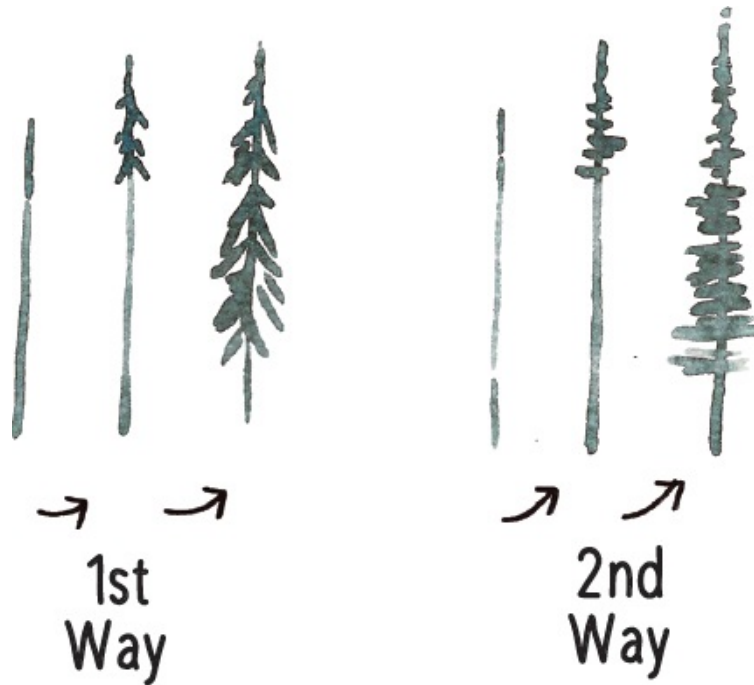


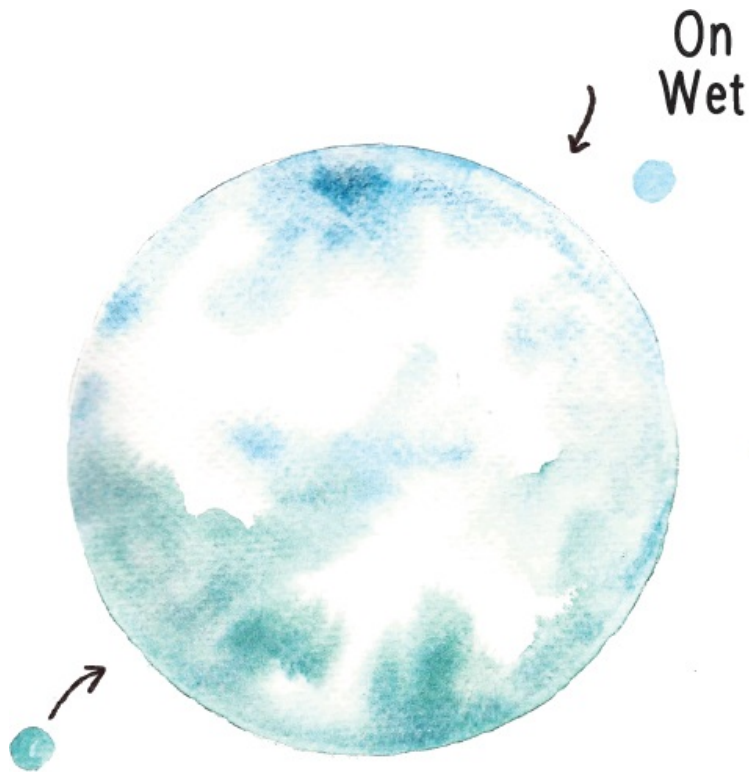
Figure 1

STEP 1

Begin by using masking tape to secure the paper to your table or board. This will keep the paper from wrinkling as we use wet techniques. I usually use medium-size masking tape.

Lightly sketch a circle with a pencil. To do this, use a compass or trace around a circular object. Wash the paper inside the circle with clean water. The water should not drench the paper but be enough to paint on the wet surface (read more about painting on wet [here](#)).

STEP 2

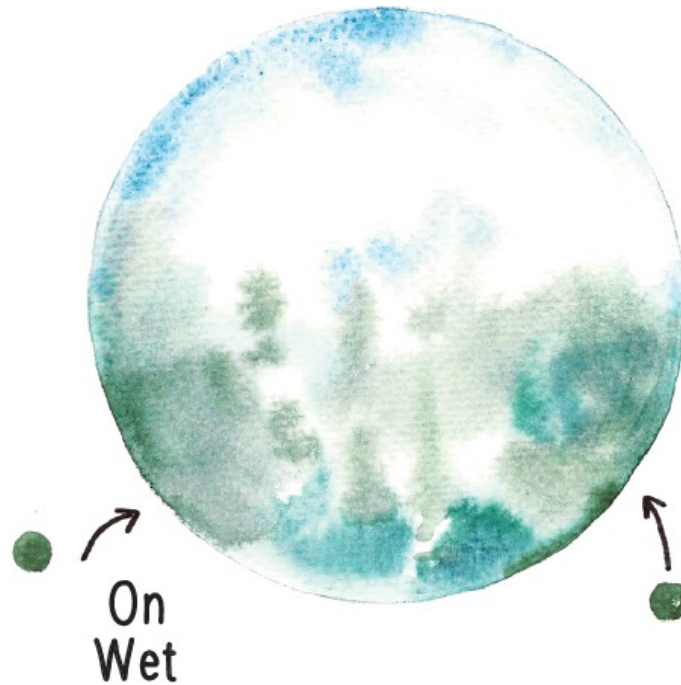


Step 2

Work quickly because the wet circle will dry fast. From the top of the circle, add watery light blue with a medium round brush (size 4–6) to the still-wet layer. Just a few touches will be enough. Leave some areas empty to give the effect of a cloudy sky.

At the bottom of the circle, add watery emerald blue to the wet layer. If the layer is already dry, wash the bottom of the circle with clean water again, then add the paint. Paint the edges of the circle neatly.

STEP 3



Step 3

Add the tint of green to the base of the wet circle using the blending technique (read more about blending [here](#)). The paint should be a medium consistency. Keep using the same medium round brush (size 4–6). Let the painting dry.

STEP 4



Step 4

Now it's time to add some trees to the background of the landscape. You can paint trees in two ways.

The **first** approach is to paint a vertical line and then start adding branches from the top. Hold the brush at a 45-degree angle and make strokes along the line. The size of the branches should gradually increase as you move toward the bottom of the tree.

The **second** way is to follow the same steps but paint the branches horizontally instead.

For this project, I've chosen the second way. Using a small round brush (size 1–3), we will paint two different types of background trees.

For the first, use a watery emerald blue to paint a few trees in one of the suggested ways. I used the layering technique (read more about layering [here](#)).

For the second type, use a watery black-blue that's almost transparent to paint a few more trees in the background.

I recommend that you not add many trees to the background. Randomly place them in different areas of the circle to obtain a more natural look and make them different heights and sizes. Allow the painting to dry.

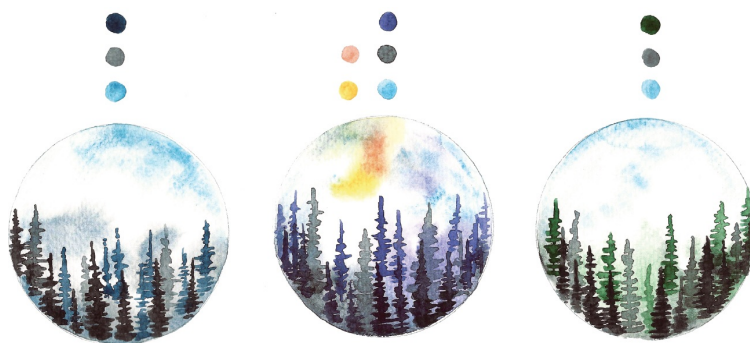


Figure 2

STEP 5



Step 5

Let's add trees to the foreground.

Using just a small amount of water, mix a thick and saturated black-blue and paint a few more trees in the same way you painted the others.
Done!

With this lesson, you will certainly be able to create beautiful and unique paintings. As you can see, the piece is easy to paint and will not take too much time.

All of these example illustrations were painted using the steps in this lesson.

Play around with the colors. Choose three or more different tints, and follow the steps from this lesson to create new idyllic landscapes.

Autumn in a Circle



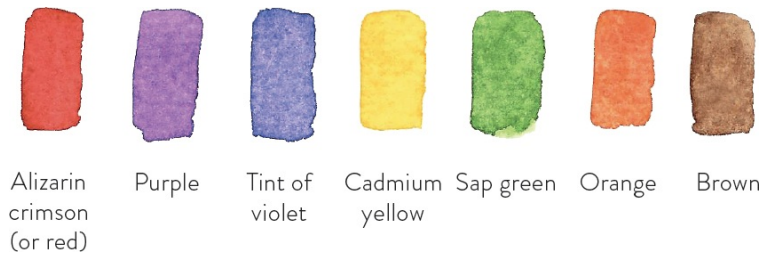
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1 or 2; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Compass, or any round object

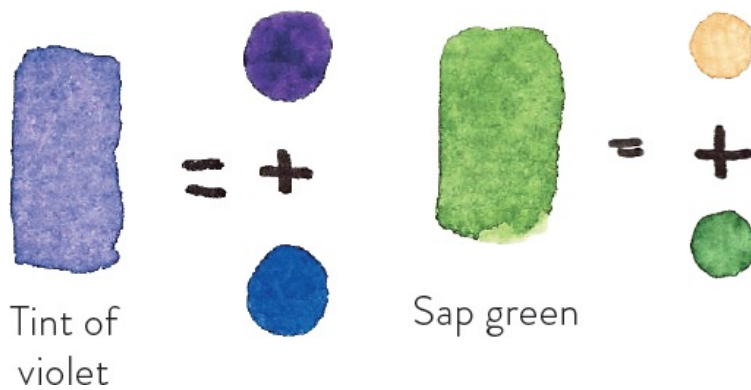
Autumn is a time of vibrant colors that many artists draw inspiration from. It can leave people speechless and in awe of the beauty of the natural world.

In this project, I'll show you how to paint an autumn landscape in a circle. Watercolors are a perfect medium for creating a picturesque autumn scene since they allow you to express all the season's vivid shades.

PROJECT COLORS



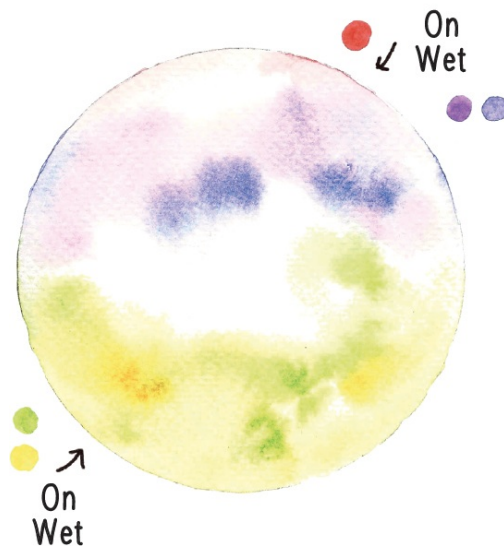
COLOR MIXING



NOTE: You should work quickly and efficiently without pausing between stages since watercolor paint dries quickly. Read all the instructions completely, then break into painting.



STEP 1



Step 1

Draw a circle with a pencil. You can make this easier by using a compass or by tracing around any circular object. Then secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Wash the area inside the circle with clean water using a medium round brush (size 5 or 6).

At the top of the still-wet layer, add the following colors: alizarin crimson, purple and tint of violet. This will be the sky of the landscape. The consistency of the paint should be quite watery (read more about painting on wet [here](#)).

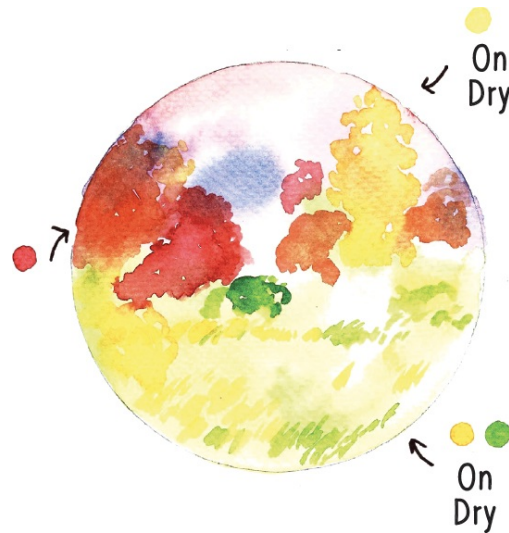
At the bottom of the circle, apply cadmium yellow and sap green. This is the first layer of grass.

Allow the painting to dry.

Figure 1 and figure 2 ([here](#)) show how to paint the grass and sky separately. This technique can actually be applied to any landscape painting. You can also experiment with the colors and try different color

combinations.

STEP 2



Step 2

Take a thin-tipped round brush (size 1 or 2) and paint thin vertical dashes of grass using cadmium yellow and sap green (read more about layering [here](#)).

Next add trees to the picture. The shape and color of different trees and other vegetation can vary greatly, so you have the opportunity to be creative with the colors you use. The colors here are just some suggestions.

So, using alizarin crimson, orange, cadmium yellow and sap green, paint trees over the dry layer with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5), as shown in step 2 or using your own design.

Without waiting for the paint to dry, go on to step 3.



Figure 1



Figure 2

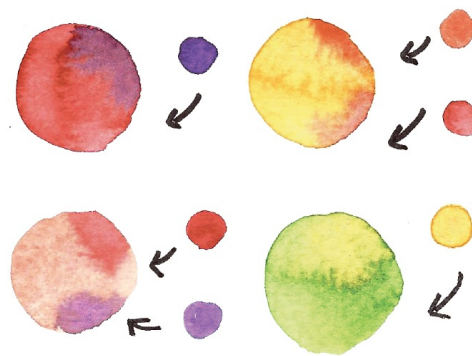
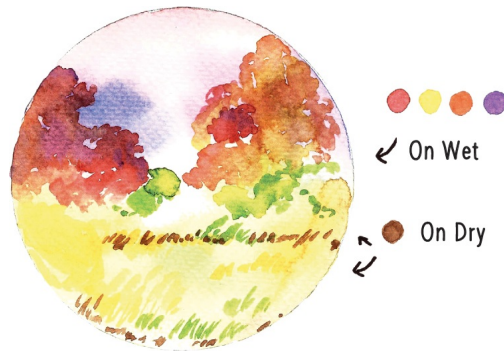


Figure 3

STEP 3



Step 3

To really portray all the beauty of autumn's colors, we will use the blending technique (read about blending [here](#)). It is the perfect technique for creating a truly stunning painting, and in figure 3 you can see exactly how this project's shades are blended.

Add purple, cadmium yellow, orange and alizarin crimson to the wet layer of trees with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5). There is no need to add much paint; one or two drops should be enough. You should now see these beautiful colors transition across the tree layers.

Let the painting dry.

The final touch at this stage will be another layer of grass. Choose a small thin-tipped round brush (size 1 or 2), and paint thin vertical dashes of grass with brown. Once again, let the painting dry.



Figure 4

STEP 4



Step 4

To really polish off your piece, add some finer elements with a detail brush, like accents on the leaves, trunks and branches of the trees and bushes. Use brushes of different sizes, depending on the size of the object you want to paint.

At this stage, I have only one piece of advice: know when to stop. Too many details can diminish the effects that were created in the previous stages. Preserve the transparency of the watercolors while adding accents and details.

This project not only creates a beautiful and impressive painting in just 15 minutes, it also allows you to refine your sense of color.

Practice, and find inspiration in nature. I'm sure you can create a lot of beautiful pieces using this project's methods.

Mountain Landscape



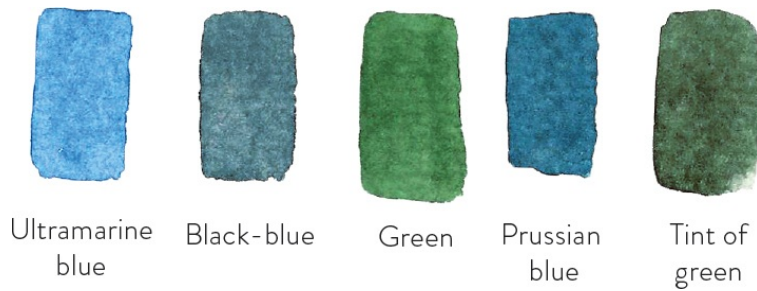
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4–6
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape
- Plastic wrap

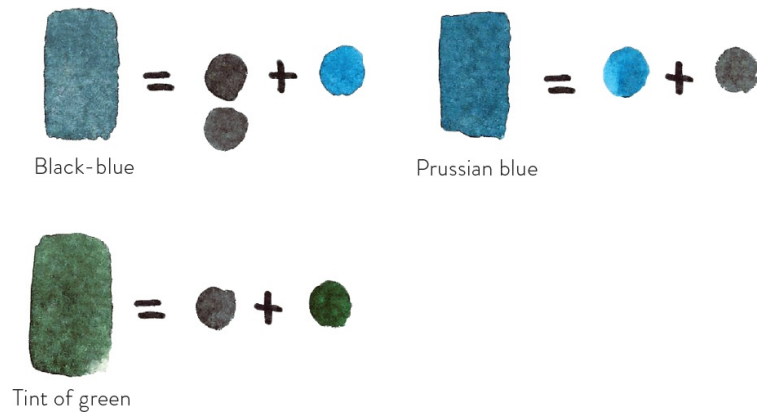
In this project, we'll paint a mountain scene. Every mountain is unique, but all are majestic and dominate the skyline like kings of the sky. So, how should you start? Well, let's consider how to portray their beauty step-by-step with a very simple method that takes only 15 minutes.

In this lesson, I have one top-secret trick that I'm sure you'll find very useful. Let's begin!

PROJECT COLORS

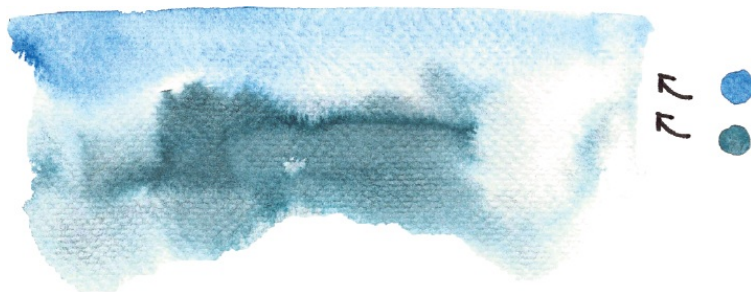


COLOR MIXING



NOTE: If you already have Prussian blue you don't need to mix it.

STEP 1



Step 1

First, secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board. This

will keep the paper from wrinkling as we use wet techniques.

Start by defining the rectangular borders of your illustration. I prefer not to have crisp borders, but it's up to you. You can draw them with a pencil if you wish to have more clearly defined borders.

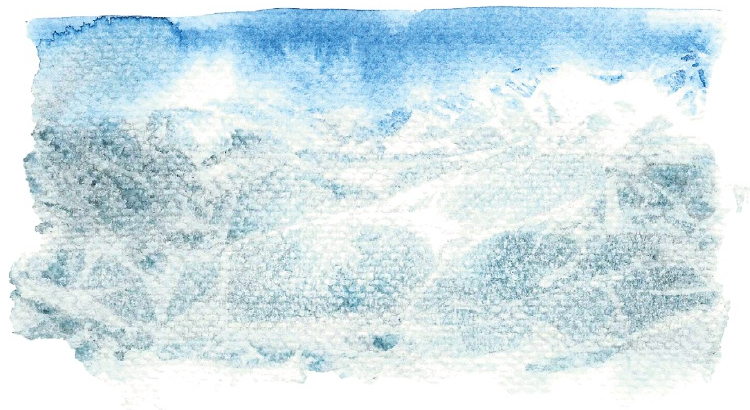
Using a size 6 medium brush, wash the rectangular area with clean water. In the upper part, add ultramarine blue. In the middle of the painting, apply black-blue.

The consistency of both paints should be pretty watery to make use of their transparency.

Do not make unnecessary brush movements. Let the paint spread itself on the wet surface of the paper. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

As you can see, we now have a beautiful transition from one color to the other.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now, to show the mountains' beauty, texture and ridges, we will use the secret trick I mentioned in the introduction.

Take some plastic wrap (yes, that stuff from your kitchen), and apply it to the middle of the wet paper, where the still-wet black-blue paint is. It shouldn't cover the sky much if at all. The plastic wrap doesn't need to be laid perfectly. It can be a bit crinkled since these creases will actually create the mountains' texture.

Now let the painting dry. Once it's dry, take off the plastic wrap and voilà—you've made a magic texture!

Drying may take some time, so if you can't wait a few minutes, carefully remove the plastic wrap and dry the paper with a hair dryer on low heat so that it doesn't damage the painting.



Figure 1

STEP 3



Step 3

Now let's start painting the landscape in more detail. Paint two hilly glades with green with a size 4 or 5 brush. I use the softening technique

for painting the perfect glade (for more about softening, see [here](#)).

Let the piece dry.

It's now time to add the mountains, whose contours are shown in figure 1.

Change to a small round brush (size 2 or 3), and follow the figure to paint a similar outline of the mountains with Prussian blue. I recommend painting only the outlines and the shadows because I think this illustrative approach is enough to make it clear you've painted a mountain range.

Let the painting dry.



Figure 3



Figure 4

STEP 4



Step 4

The final step is painting the fine details and finishing touches with a small round brush (size 2 or 3).

Add more outlines to the mountain area with black-blue and Prussian blue. Also paint trees on the hills with black-blue, the tint of green and green.

Note that the trees in the background are slightly lower than the ones in the front.

You can really let your creativity flourish here and add a wide variety of details to create a truly stunning painting.

Figure 3 is a painting made by following this lesson's instruction, but some other colors were used and some of the details are different, such as the grass, deciduous trees and trail.

I also want to draw your attention to the painting's texture, which was added with the plastic wrap trick.

In figure 2, step 2 was skipped, and you can really see the difference. Of course, whether to add the texture is your decision. Personally, I prefer interesting effects, and I like to create textures in works painted with watercolors.

I hope you enjoyed this lesson and that my instructions allow you to create many beautiful mountain landscapes.

Flowering Meadow



SUPPLIES

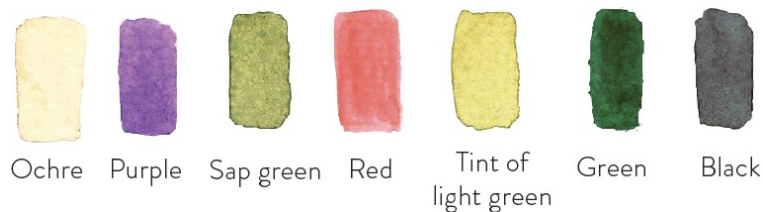
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape

This is one of my favorite projects since it doesn't take too much time, and the finished painting looks stunning. As always with this book's projects, you need to know just a few principles to make a masterpiece. So, let's paint a field of flowers!

For this project, I chose a field of poppies. This landscape looks especially captivating at sunset. When painting the sky, you can choose from many different colors—any shades of blue, purple, orange, yellow and even red—depending on how you want your work to come across.

I think that the most important aspect of this work is the style of painting. Although it's painted freestyle, it looks quite professional. Let's paint it step-by-step.

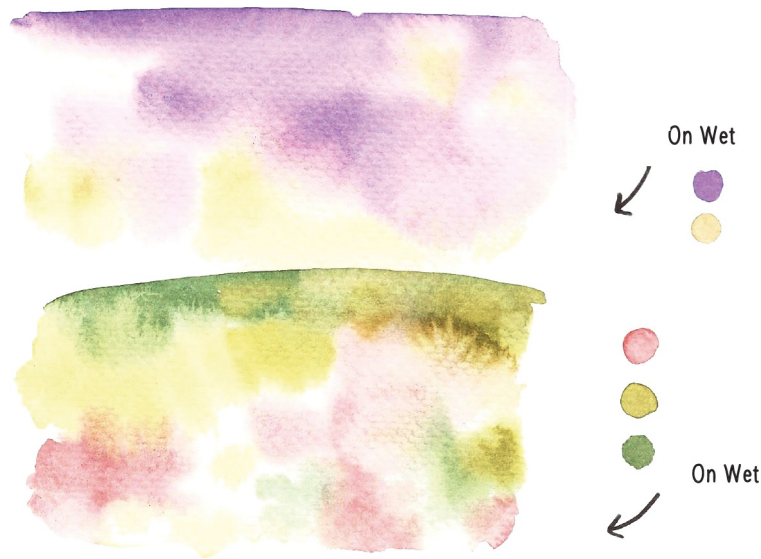
PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



STEP 1



Step 1

Before starting, secure your paper with masking tape to your table or board. This will keep the paper from slipping while we use a wet technique.

First, you need to define the area of the painting. You can either draw a rectangle with a pencil and paint inside it or paint in an abstract rectangular area without any borders. With the latter method, the edges will be uneven and a bit sloppy, but they will create a unique and personalized piece. I actually prefer painting this way.

Wash the upper one-third of the rectangle with clean water. Using a thin-tipped medium round brush (size 5 or 6), add ochre and purple to the still-wet layer (read more about painting on wet [here](#)). The consistency of the paint should be watery since this will be our illustration's sky.

TIP: Don't move the brush much on the wet paper. Just make a few touches or very free movements in one direction

Let the layer dry.

Paint a sap-green arc between the top and middle thirds of the rectangle and soften it with clean water (read more about softening [here](#)). The arc

should not be too curved since it is the horizon line.

Wash the bottom third of the rectangle with water and add red and the light green tint to it, as shown in the example.

Don't wait for the paint to dry. Move on immediately to step 2.

STEP 2



Step 2

Use a size 2 or 3 round brush to add red and green to the wet layer of the field (for more about blending, see [here](#)). The paint should be watery.

Don't make unnecessary movements with the brush. A few soft touches will be enough to create the image you desire. Allow the illustration to dry.

Now paint a few bushes and trees on the horizon line with green and the tint of light green. You can also underline the horizon line using green and sap green. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Let the painting dry.



Figure 1

STEP 3

Step 3



Let's add some details to your work. This time, you'll paint on the dry layer. Begin by randomly painting the background with spots of green, red and sap green using a small round brush (size 2 or 3). The closer the spots are to the foreground, the bigger they should be.

In the foreground, add a few large flowers, like the poppies I've chosen here. Use a medium round brush (size 4 or 5) to paint them in red.

Allow the painting to dry.

In figure 1 you can see some different shapes of the poppy flower. Your flowers shouldn't be perfectly shaped—keep them simple—but they should be recognizable as the type of flower you've chosen.

Let the painting dry.



Figure 1

STEP 4



Step 4

Add some intricate details with a small round brush (size 1 or 2) as a finishing touch. Paint additional petals with red, add black spots to the poppies' centers and paint the grass and stems with green.

By following these steps, you can paint a variety of beautiful, blooming fields. Mix things up and create new designs by changing some or all of the painting's colors as well as by experimenting with different flower types.

In figure 2 you can see some paintings created by following this lesson.

Experiment with the finer details and play with colors. Allow yourself to be creative and enjoy the process of painting.

By the Sea

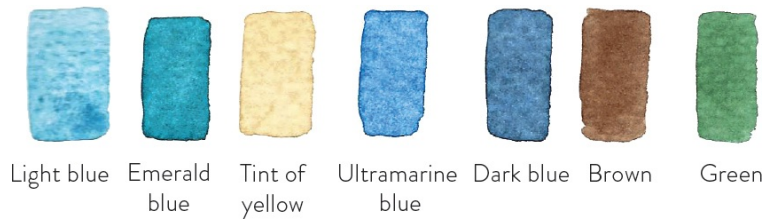


SUPPLIES

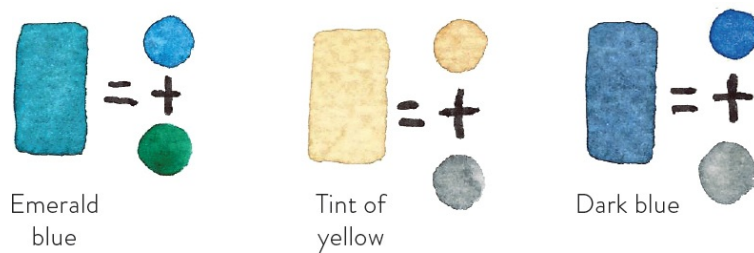
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush (optional)
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape

Painting a seascape is easier than it seems. Seas and oceans, like any other part of nature, can vary immensely. But even so, specific aspects of a seascape can be easily identified and portrayed in your art. Let's start!

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

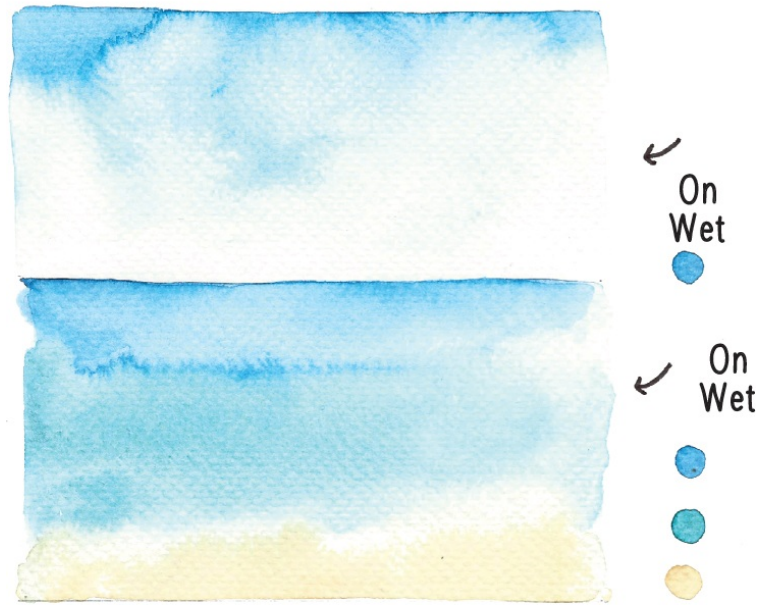


Before you start painting, choose a layout, like a rectangle, circle or some kind of random shape. For this lesson, I chose an abstract rectangle.

Sketch with a pencil the top and bottom lines of the layout's borders. If you use an abstract shape like me, the borders on the sides will not have definite edges. This makes the painting area more free yet will still give it clearly defined edges.

Now secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

STEP 1



Step 1

Since you need to create a nice gradient with three colors, I recommend making brush movements in only one direction and avoiding extra movements. Just let the watercolors spread across the wet paper naturally. I also advise leaving some areas empty so that the painting looks fairly transparent and has a shimmering effect, just as the water in the sea does.

Wash the top third of the rectangle with water using a medium round brush (size 5 or 6). Add light blue to the still-wet layer, starting at the top. The paint should be watery. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#) and more about paint consistency [here](#).)

Blur the paint with the brush to get a gradient going from light blue to transparent. Allow the painting to dry.

Now wash the bottom two-thirds of the painting with clean water using your medium-size brush again. Apply, in order, light blue, emerald blue and the tint of yellow, as in the example.

Let the painting dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

To create a more interesting illustration, add mountains, a cliff or an island to the background. Whatever you choose, its outline should be visible but not sharp, so paint it with muted colors. Since the painting is done freestyle, I chose highly abstract mountains.

So, using a thin-tipped round brush (size 4), paint the outlines of the mountains with ultramarine blue and fill them with a wash of the same color (read more about layering [here](#)). The consistency of this paint should be watery. Let the layer dry.

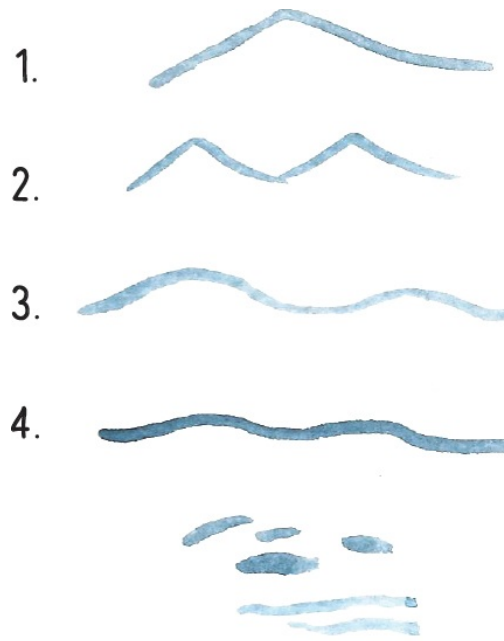


Figure 1

Now it's time to add the waves. Using a small round brush (size 2 or 3), paint the waves closer to the shore with emerald blue. Paint waves that are faraway at the horizon line with ultramarine blue. Both paints should be of a medium consistency.

The farther they are from the coast, the shorter the lines should appear and the higher their frequency. The waves can be different shapes to make them more lifelike. Figure 1 shows some simple forms of waves. Of course, these are very abstract and simple lines, but visually they are enough to suggest waves.

Paint the wave lines randomly, without any order. This makes the illustration look more natural and less structured.

The last part of this step is adding the tint of yellow to the bottom of the painting. The paint should be thick and saturated.

Allow the painting to dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

In this step, we'll add more details.

Paint more waves using emerald blue, ultramarine blue and dark blue. Also make the horizon line clearer with dark blue. To paint these features, use a detail brush or a small round brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2).

So that the coast does not look empty, paint a few stones of different sizes with brown. Also add some spots to the sand layer with the tint of yellow. These spots create a beautiful texture that makes the painting more interesting.

Let the piece dry.

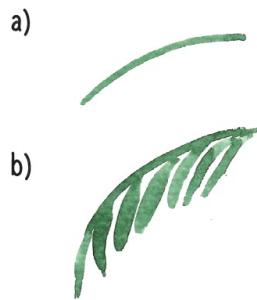


Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

The painting already looks great, but we will add more details to complete your masterpiece. For this step, use a small round brush (size 1–3).

Paint some more waves with emerald blue and dark blue.

Then, in the upper part of the painting (where the sky is), paint a few palm branches in green, as in figure 2. Each leaf is created by gently

pressing and pulling the brush on the paper (read more about brush strokes [here](#)). The paint should be thick since the palm branches will be a contrast to the sky.

Now it's time to add details to the shore.

Randomly paint the grass in several places with green. But don't overdo it: this is a beach after all.

The final touch is adding shadows to the stones using dark blue or brown paint.



Figure 3

After all your hard work, we are finally done!

In this lesson, we painted a simple seascape, but by following the principles and tips in this lesson, you can create your own unique

seascape. Try to capture not only colors and details, but also the mood the sea conveys.

You can experiment both with the colors of the sky and sea as well as with the colors of the shore and background to make the painting truly your own.

Figure 3 shows two different seascapes created from this lesson but with different colors that create different compositions.

Painting this type of landscape not only creates a beautiful picture, but also gives you an excellent sense of how watercolor painting works since it uses several different techniques. Be creative and experiment, and most importantly enjoy the process of painting!

Underwater Seascape



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Flat brush sizes: medium 4–6 (optional)
- Detail brush (optional)
- Masking tape
- Paper towel

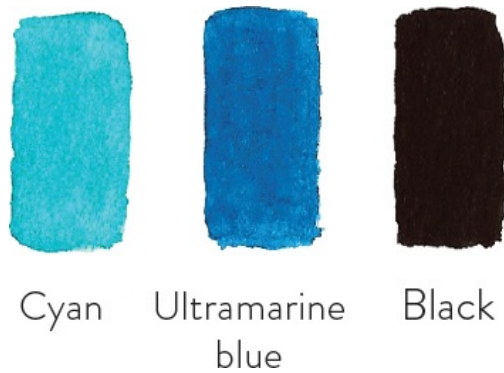
There are many subjects perfect for watercolor, and one is the underwater world. With several cunning tricks and the correct sequence of steps, you'll have an amazing watercolor painting.

I always thought it was very difficult to paint light, especially the rays of light penetrating deep into the sea. As a result, I often avoided it. I was thoroughly surprised when I discovered that painting light is much

easier and quicker than it seems.

If you do not have these shades of blue, then use any blue from your watercolor set. Instead of cyan, mix any blue with a drop of green. And instead of ultramarine blue, use any blue. The whole point is that the farther the water is from the light source, the darker and richer it becomes.

PROJECT COLORS



NOTE: Before you begin any work, read the lesson's step-by-step instructions completely. Only after that should you begin to work.

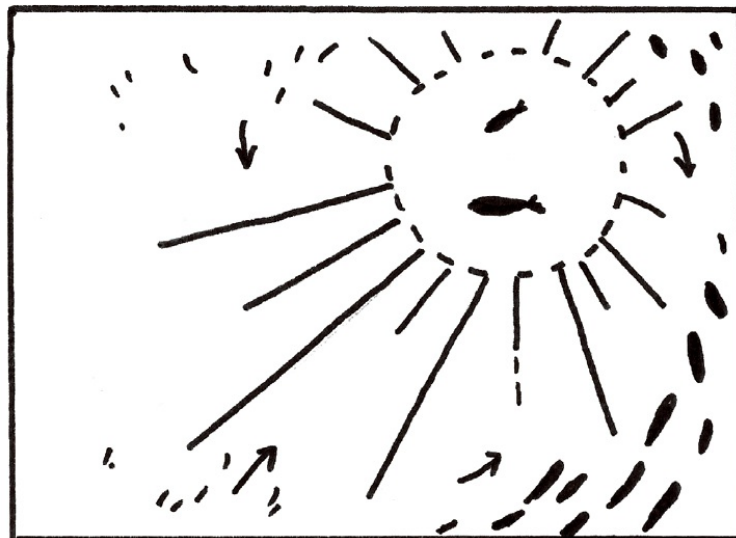


Figure 1

Look at figure 1 for a simplified outline of the project, which features a source of light delving deep into the water. As I already mentioned, the farther the water is from the light source, the darker and richer it becomes. Another important point is that the schools of fish move in a specific direction. This creates a certain rhythm and orderliness in the composition. Placing the two fish randomly in the center of the work, makes the piece more interesting and lifelike.

STEP 1



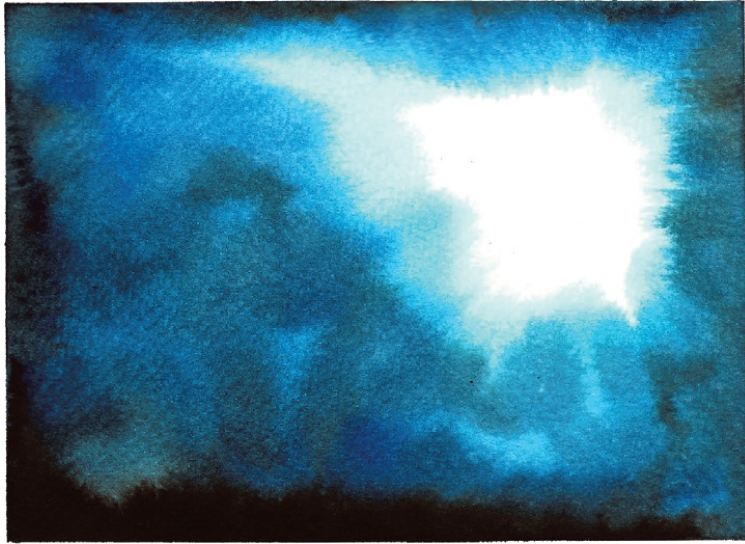
Step 1

Using masking tape, outline a rectangle or square. This will be the working area, or scene, of your painting.

Moisten the working area with clean water. There should not be so much that you get a surplus, but not too little either. Enough that the paper looks shining. Then, using a medium round brush (size 4–6), add a lightly watered-down cyan to the wet paper, except for where the light will be. Remember that you do not need to press hard or make large strokes for the paint to spread. With proper paper moistening, the pigment will spread across the paper on its own. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Without waiting for the painted layer to dry, go on to the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

We need to work quickly at this stage. Prepare a thick ultramarine blue, and add it to the still-wet layer, again excluding the area where the light will be. Now add medium-consistency black around the edges of the work (read more about blending [here](#)). Use the same brush that you used in step 1.

Now, without slowing down or letting the painting dry, begin step 3.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to work on our light source. To do this, take a thick paper towel and press it to the paper to remove any paint from the light area. This will give the area soft edges and a shape that's more or less round.

Now take a clean dry or almost-dry brush, and create rays of light from the light source, as shown in the example. A flat brush with a hard pile is best for this, but a medium round brush (size 4–6) will work too. The brush will absorb the paint and leave behind a stunning ray effect.

After each time you hold the brush to the paper, clean it by wiping it with a paper towel or napkin.

Let the painting dry completely.

NOTE: The paper should still be wet as you work. If the paper managed to dry after step 2, you will not be able to add the rays of light. If this happens, skip step 3 and go to step 4.



figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Next we need to make our underwater world lifelike by adding some inhabitants. To do this, prepare black in a medium or even thick consistency, and paint the silhouettes of the fish, as shown in the example.

To paint more fish, use a round brush with a thin tip (size 1–3) or a detail brush.

Let the painting dry completely.

I hope you will practice all the tricks in this lesson. Don't worry if everything doesn't work out the first time you try them. Be patient and keep practicing.

You can add variety to your work by experimenting with the sea inhabitants. Besides changing the fishs' location and size, as seen in figure 2, you can also try a wide variety of shapes and silhouettes. And don't restrict yourself to just fish. You can also paint silhouettes of larger animals, such as sharks, dolphins or even humans. Why not?

Be inspired by nature. Look for photo references showing real scenes from the underwater world and explore them with your painting. Let your creative journey be exciting and full of discoveries.



DREAMY

Galaxies

This chapter is special to me as my real creative journey began with painting galaxies and the universe. I'd painted a lot of subjects with watercolors before, but I didn't feel a true freedom or become unafraid to make mistakes until I started painting mysterious and magical galaxies.

It's possible to create very beautiful blending and color transitions with watercolors. In galaxies, you can get excellent color depth with the right balance of water and paint. And by adding stars, planets or other elements, you can get a very bright and recognizable painting. To me, it's impossible to make a mistake when painting a galaxy. Every project in this chapter is simple and takes no more than 15 minutes. So arm yourself with your brushes, and let's get started.

Colorful Planets



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1 or 2; medium 4 or 5; large 7–9
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Compass, or any round objects of different diameters
- White pen or white gouache

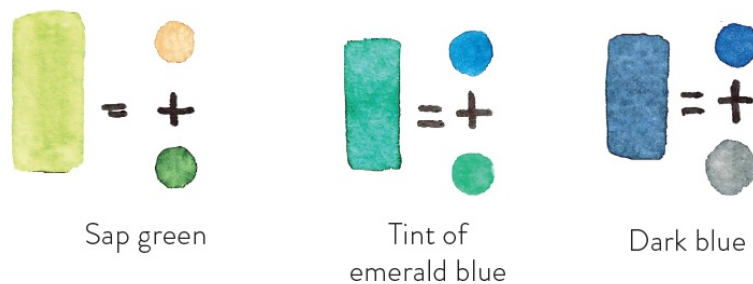
Painting colorful planets freestyle is perhaps the very first thing I did with real inspiration. They're surprisingly simple and very relaxing to paint when using an abstract style and invented planets.

When I first began painting planets, I tried to paint the real ones of our solar system. But I soon realized this wasn't for me because I don't have enough patience. So, I switched to painting abstract planets. While experimenting with colors and techniques, the stress and the fear of making a mistake disappeared. Later I began adding rich dark backgrounds to my planet paintings. This final touch made my work even more beautiful with deeper and richer colors.

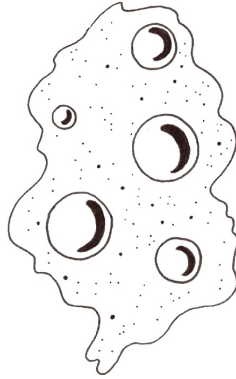
PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



STEP 1

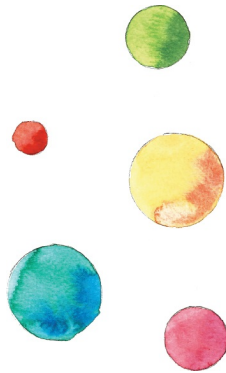


Step 1

First, secure the paper to your board or table with masking tape. Now draw several circles of different diameters with a pencil, as shown in the image for step 1. Use a compass or any round objects of different diameters, like plates for example. I prefer tracing around a roll of masking tape to create the circles.

There is no need to draw the details or the curved contours of the galaxy. Just jump into the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

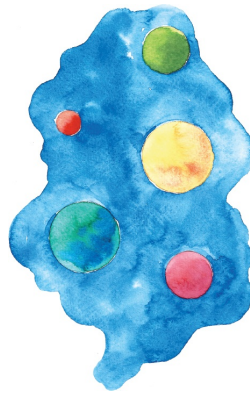
Prepare medium-thick paint in the following shades: sap green, green, orange-red, red, yellow, tint of emerald blue, ultramarine blue, crimson pink and magenta.

Now we will begin painting the planets by filling one circle with sap green using a medium round brush (size 4 or 5). Then add green to the still-wet layer on the right side of the circle with the tip of your brush. Touch the brush just a few times and let the paint spread itself over the wet surface of the paper. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Now repeat this step for the rest of the planets using the following color pairs: orange-red and red, yellow and orange-red, tint of emerald blue and ultramarine blue and crimson pink and magenta.

Go on to the next step once the painting is dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Dampen the area around the planets with clean water. Add a medium-consistency ultramarine blue to the wet layer with a size 7–9 round brush.

Add the paint to the background and planets' borders very carefully. Use a small round brush (size 1 or 2) to work in these areas more easily. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Without waiting for this base to dry, begin the next step.

STEP 4



Step 4

Prepare purple and dark blue in a thick consistency. Add these shades to the still-wet background layer with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5).

The background should be very rich and the colors deep. Add paint until you get the necessary saturation depth. If for some reason the paint dried in step 3, then add purple and dark blue shades to the background by using the layering technique.



Figure 1

STEP 5



Step 5

The work is almost finished. Let's add stars so that the painting turns into a small universe with colorful planets. Using a white pen and working out from the center, draw dots randomly and in different sizes on the background until you fill the entire background with stars.

If you don't have a white pen, white gouache is suitable as well. Apply it with a detail brush.

Let the paint dry.

Since this book is for painting quick watercolor sketches, don't spend a lot of time making everything perfect. Just follow my instructions and go with your creative flow. Remember that some minor mistakes will make the work charming and unique.

With the principles in this lesson, you can also create different galaxies and universes with different planets. To do this, change the locations of the planets (or whichever subject you chose), and try creating different abstract forms for the background. Take a look at the example in figure 1.

As for the colors, try using the shades in this project first, then, when you gain confidence, experiment with other colors and various color combinations.

Full Moon



SUPPLIES

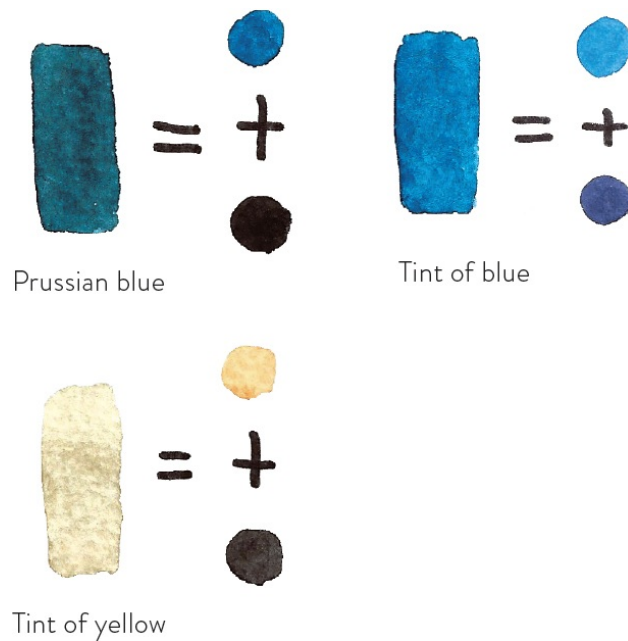
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Compass, or any round object

In this project, I will explain step-by-step how to paint a full moon. The moon, though the closest body to us in space, is also the most mystical. Since ancient times, people have been exploring the influence of the moon on nature, society and even people themselves. Here we will use the earth's natural satellite as the subject of a watercolor illustration. Let's get started!

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



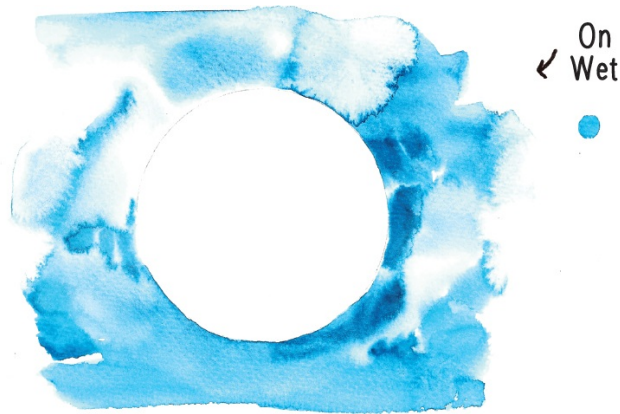
STEP 1

Using a pencil, draw a circle on your watercolor paper. This will be the base for the moon. You can trace around any circular object, like a plate or cup, or use a compass to draw it neatly and easily.

Make sure the circle isn't too large relative to the size of the paper. Experiment with the dimensions of the moon and decide what looks best.

Then secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

STEP 2



Step 2

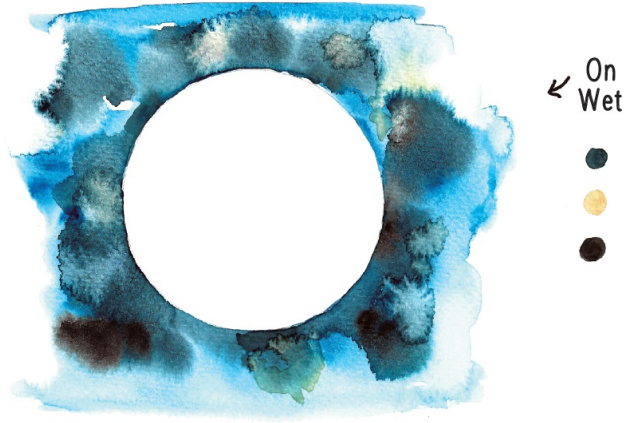
Wash the surface outside of the circle with clean water. Add a thick Prussian blue to the wet paper with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5).

It's enough to apply just a couple dabs of paint in a few places. The paint will spread over the wet surface to create a stunning watercolor effect (read more about painting on wet [here](#)).

Then, using a small brush with a thin tip (size 1–3), very gently blend the paint around the outline of the circle. Try not to go inside the circle. It's not easy, so be patient and take it slow to make the work look neat.

Don't wait for the layer to dry. Go straight to step 3.

STEP 3



Step 3

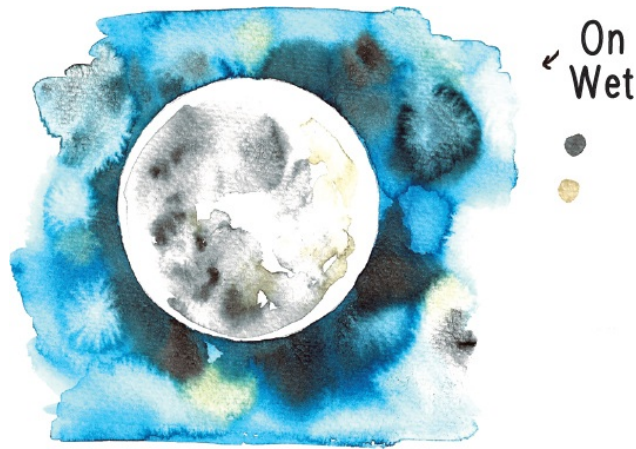
Add a layer of black, ochre and the tint of blue to the wet paper with a thin-tipped round brush (size 2 or 3). The paint should be of a medium consistency. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Now add to the same layer a few drops of clean water (read more about using water droplets [here](#)). These droplets will create a beautiful and unusual effect.

TIP: If there is too much water in the painting, you can remove it with a clean and dry brush. Just touch the brush to the overly wet area and it will absorb the excess. Don't press the brush to the surface, though, or you'll create an unwanted mark.

Now let the painting dry.

STEP 4



Step 4

With the background complete, we're ready for the fun part—painting the moon! The area inside the circle will be the moon and, once again, we'll be painting on wet.

Wash the surface inside the circle with clean water, working carefully so as not to smudge the background. On the wet layer, add the tint of yellow and black by touching a small round brush (size 2 or 3) to the paper a few times for each color and letting the paint distribute itself inside the circle. Both paints should be very watery.

NOTE: Pay attention to the example. Not all of the circle should be filled, and one half should be painted more than the other. This gives the circle more depth, with the white areas representing the glow of the moon.

Allow the layer to dry.



Figure 1

STEP 5



Step 5

You're almost done! Now you just need to add the finer details.

Paint a black shadow as shown in the image of step 5. I recommend using the softening technique for this (read more about softening [here](#)). The paint consistency should be thick and saturated using a medium brush with a thin tip (size 4 or 5).

You probably know that there are a lot of craters on the moon's surface. It is not necessary to paint a lot of them, but paint a few inside the circle as shown in step 5 with a detail brush and thick black paint. I suggest that you refer to an actual photo of the moon to understand how to paint the craters.

Details can be added in multiple layers using the layering technique (read more about layering [here](#)). The main point is not to overload the painting with too many elements, as they'll be distracting and take away from the look of the painting.

Our illustration is complete. Now let's see how we can use this lesson to create a wide variety of works and practice your watercolor painting.

First, I advise you to experiment with color combinations and try out different options. Refer to photos of the real moon if you need inspiration. You can also add details in different quantities and styles to create many unique paintings.

With figure 1, I repeated the sequence and steps of this lesson, changing only the color scheme and the craters. As you can see, the work also looks perfect, but in a different way. It also took 15 minutes or less. I hope you like this lesson and have fun experimenting with the project.

Galaxy in a Circle



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Compass, or any round object
- Paper napkin
- White gouache

When painting galaxies, I like to paint ones that look like tiny miracles full of dreamy, vivid colors. So in this project, I'll show you how to paint a whole galaxy in just a circle.

Universes and galaxies are very trendy subjects for watercolor painting

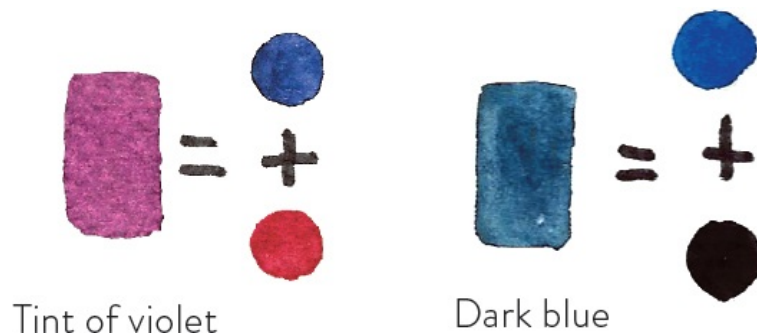
right now, and there are many different methods of creating illustrations of them. My method, as always, is simple and doesn't take much of your time.

Let's look at how to do it step-by-step.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

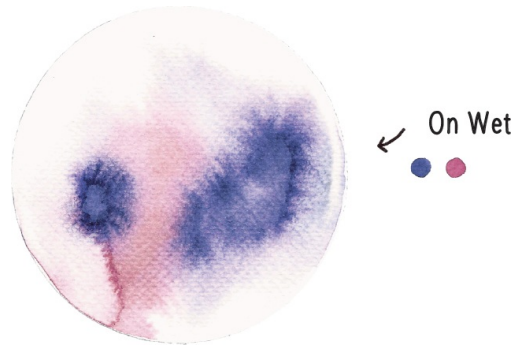


NOTE: You should work quickly and efficiently without pausing between steps since watercolor paint dries quickly. Read all the instructions completely, then break into painting.

STEP 1

Draw a circle with a pencil. It's often easiest to use a compass or trace around a circular object. Then secure the sheet of paper with masking tape to your board or table.

STEP 2



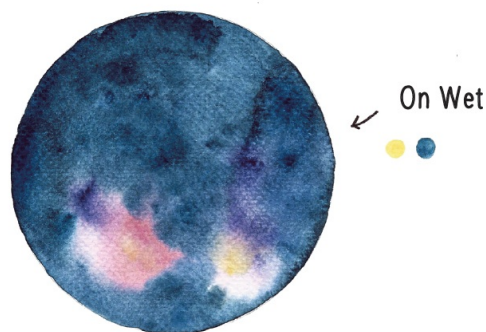
Step 2

Wash the area inside the circle with clean water. Add purple and the tint of violet to the wet circle, mostly in the center. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

The paints' consistency should be watery. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6), and don't make unnecessary movements with it. Just soft touches are enough. The paint should spread itself over the wet surface.

Do not wait for the layer to dry. Quickly go to the next step.

STEP 3



Step 3

Apply dark blue to the wet layer. Be very careful at the edges and try not

to go outside the circle. Your painting may look a bit messy otherwise. The paint should be fairly thick.

Now add a few dabs of cadmium yellow to the parts that already have the tint of violet and purple.

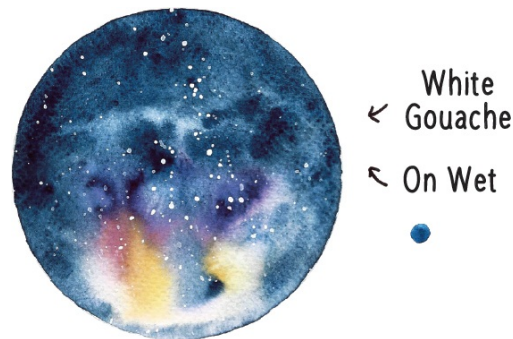
I don't recommend you brush the paint much. In most places you can let the watercolor do the work and spread itself—that's its beauty!

The edges of the circle, however, are quite another matter. There the paint can be spread with a small round brush (size 1–3) so that the edges are neat. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

When painting a galaxy, you need to have intense shades for the background. I advise that you add another dark blue layer on the wet surface, especially at the outside edges of the circle.

Let the painting dry.

STEP 4



Step 4

Now add splatters of white gouache. You can practice splattering on another sheet of paper so you do not spoil the piece. Once you've made your splatters, take a paper napkin and wipe away the gouache that fell outside the circle. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Let the painting dry.

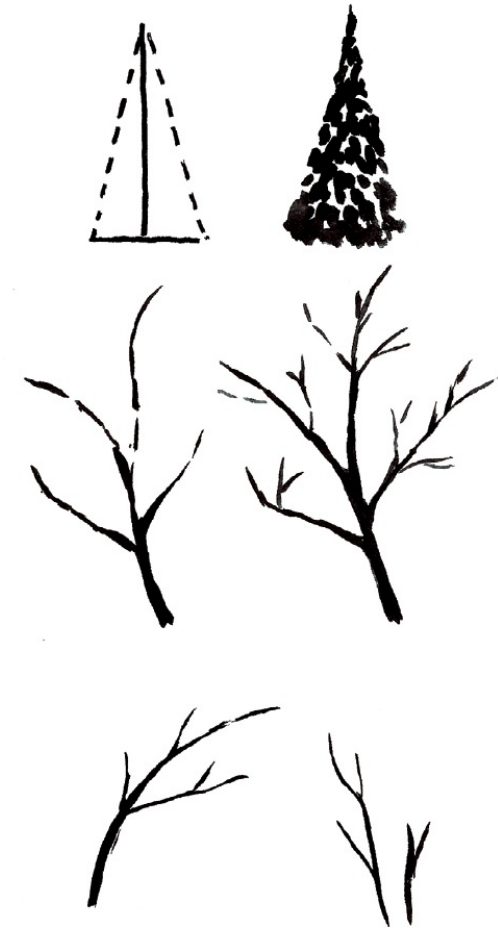


Figure 1

STEP 5



Step 5

The work already looks beautiful! The background color is intense and saturated, yet the splatters of gouache create an excellent contrast. But let's keep going and finish the illustration.

Paint a black shape at the bottom of the circle. It doesn't need to be perfect. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6) and thick-consistency paint. Now take a detail brush and paint several trees in black. Figure 1 shows a few different types of trees.

You can use your imagination and paint different kinds of tree silhouettes. Also paint some shooting stars with white gouache if you want. Always try to balance your work with details but take care not to add too many elements.

Let the piece dry completely.

Using these steps, you can quickly paint small galaxies. I like to paint galaxies in circles because they make the picture neater, but you can choose another shape if you wish.

Experiment with colors and try different color combinations. The

silhouettes in the painting can also be very different; it's not necessary to paint only trees. Try silhouettes of people or buildings, for example. Make your own story. Create your own magic while painting your own small galaxy.

Universe in My Teacup



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4–6
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- White gel pen or white gouache



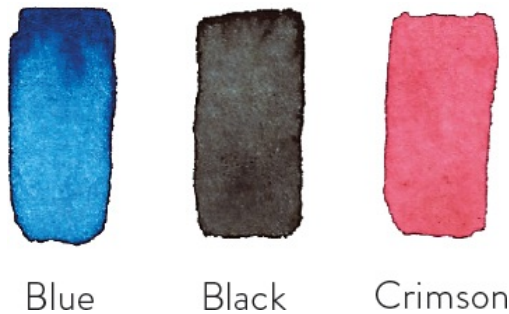
Figure 1

If you like everything that's unusual or even fantastic, then this project is

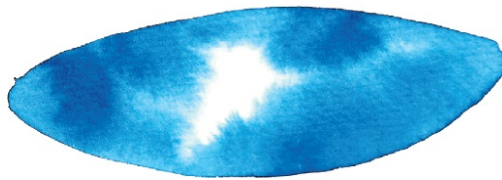
for you. In this lesson I will tell you how to create real magic with watercolors by painting a universe in a teacup. I got this idea after creating rectangular and circular paintings of the universe many times. I thought their magic could be painted inside anything. Teacups are my favorite alternative.

So, let's get going and paint the entire universe in a teacup!

PROJECT COLORS



STEP 1



Step 1

Secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board before painting. This will keep the paper from wrinkling as we use wet techniques.

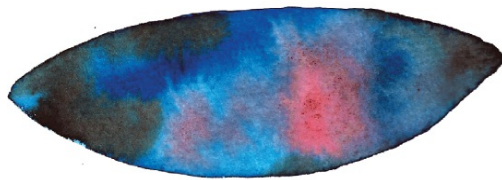
With a pencil, draw a light sketch of the picture in figure 1. Do not draw details at this stage, though. Just baselines are enough.

Wash the area inside the teacup with clean water. Add medium-consistency blue to the wet shape. Don't make unnecessary movements

with the brush; just soft touches should be enough, as the paint will spread itself over the wet surface. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6). (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Quickly move to the next step. Do not wait for the layer to dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Add blue, black and crimson to the wet layer. The paint for all these shades should be thick and saturated. Use your medium-size brush again, and work carefully, especially at the edges of the shape. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

NOTE: Black should be added only at the edges of the shape. This will leave the colors clearer and brighter.

Let the painted layer dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

Now use black in a watery consistency to paint the shape of the cup using a round brush with a thin tip (size 2 or 3). I advise painting the cup's outline with broken lines since it's better to make the line thin and, if need be, thicken it later. If the line is too thick, the painting will look rough and untidy. For making a shine on the teacup, leave some areas free from paint, as shown in the example.

Next, fill in the teacup shape with black.

After the painting is completely dry, move on to the final step.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

The last step is the most fun, in my opinion. The work is almost complete, and you can enjoy the process of adding some small and cute details such as stars, dots of different diameters or a planet.

So, draw some details with a white pen inside the universe. Remember that the layer you made in step 3 should be dry before you start (read more about layering [here](#)).

TIP: You can splatter white gouache instead of drawing with the white pen, but since the area of the universe in this project is very small, I find using a pen to be more precise.

Let the work dry completely.

A painted circle is a piece of a miracle that each of us can create. Do not try to make the work perfect. Minor flaws and irregularities will make your painting unique and cute.

You can practice this project to improve your watercolor skills. To add variety, try using different colors. And, of course, there is no limit to your imagination with the details. You can also paint a variety of cup shapes to create completely different images. Figure 2 shows the image I created using this lesson's methods.

As you can see, there are a lot of options. Keep painting and practicing. Making magic is easy with watercolors! I hope you enjoyed this journey through the universe—in a teacup!

Whale Galaxy



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- White gouache
- White pen (optional)

Painting a galaxy with watercolors is always fun. But sometimes I like to mix it up and make something new and exciting. My solution is to create the universe inside a silhouette. Here I chose a whale—of course a whale! What other animal carries so much mystery and majestic beauty? Moreover, a whale silhouette is easily identifiable. I can't wait to show

you how to paint a galaxy whale. Let's start!

PROJECT COLORS



Ultramarine
blue

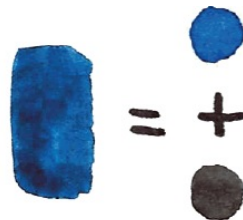


Dark blue



Permanent
magenta
(or crimson)

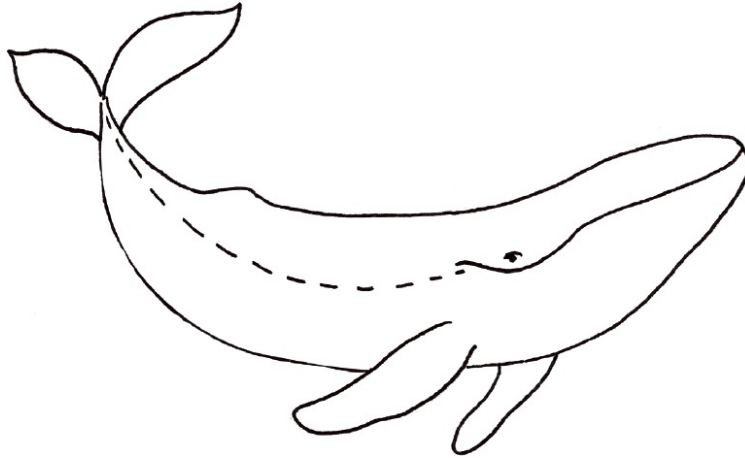
COLOR MIXING



Dark blue

NOTE: You should work quickly and efficiently without pausing between steps since watercolor paint dries quickly. Read all the instructions completely, then break into painting.

STEP 1



Step 1

Secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board before painting. This will keep the paper from wrinkling as we use wet techniques.

Now comes perhaps the most difficult step: sketching an animal with a pencil. Draw a light sketch, no details needed, and draw the whale's eye very simply. Just a mark should be enough.

Carefully wash the inside of the whale with clean water so that you stay within the lines. I recommend applying water in the center of the silhouette with a medium round brush (size 4–6) and then spreading it to the edges with a smaller round brush (size 1–3).

Do not wait for the water to dry. Go on immediately to the second step.

STEP 2



Step 2

Using your medium-size brush again, add ultramarine blue, dark blue and permanent magenta to the wet layer. The paint should be thick and saturated. Don't make unnecessary movements with the brush; just lightly touch the paper's surface and allow the pigment to spread across it. Work carefully, especially at the edges of the figure. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Add a few touches of white gouache to the still-wet layer.

TIP: If there is too much liquid inside the shape, touch a clean, dry brush to it with minimal pressure. The brush will absorb the excess liquid.

Let the painting dry.

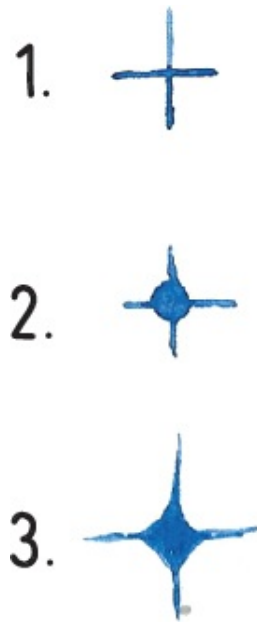


Figure 1

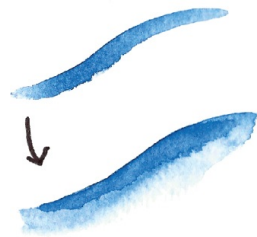


Figure 2

STEP 3



Step 3

Using a small brush with a thin tip (size 1–3), add a shadow and the details with dark blue, as shown in step 3. Then add some random waves and stars with ultramarine blue. The consistency of both paints should be medium.

Figure 2 shows how to paint a wave using the softening technique (read more about softening [here](#)). Figure 1 shows step-by-step how to add stars.

At this stage, you can use your imagination and be creative. Paint whatever details you want—have fun with it! My only advice is not to overdo it: sometimes less is more.

When you're done, allow the painting to dry.

Figure 3



STEP 4



Step 4

The last step is the most fun. Once the painting is dry, splatter it with dark blue paint. Practice first by splattering on another sheet of paper so that you don't spoil the piece.

Now splatter on some white gouache. Do not add too many splatters, as they need to be in balance with the rest of the picture.

You can also draw some details with a white gel pen, but wait until the previous layer dries.

Let the work dry completely. Now it's finished!

Using the same steps, you can create different whale galaxies or even galaxies inside other animals. In principle, you can paint a small universe inside any silhouette. Experiment with colors and try different

color combinations. Figure 3 shows one example. It's effortless, and everyone can do it.



ELEGANT

Plants AND Foliage

We live in a world filled with beauty and all sorts of colors, shapes and textures. Everything around us can be a great source of inspiration. Even the leaves on a branch or a potted plant can be excellent subjects or parts of your work.

You will be surprised by how much joy and inspiration plant and foliage painting can bring. Personally, this was a great discovery for me. Before, I did not know that in just 15 minutes or less, I could create a small masterpiece. Nowadays, when I have no inspiration or don't know where to start, I do warm-ups by painting leaves or plants. They're always a backup for me.

For this chapter, I picked beautiful and very simple projects. I hope you will like them and that painting plants will bring you a lot of joy.

Beautiful Wreath



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 5 or 6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Compass, or any round object
- Eraser

Leafy wreathes are very popular subjects for watercolor painting. They can decorate nearly anything, like an invitation or booklet or can even

be logos. Their whole point lies in their simplicity, and I am fully confident that this project can be mastered by anyone, even those with little experience with 15-minute watercolor paintings. Let's break things down step-by-step so you can learn some of the nuances that will help you master the work the first time.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



Before beginning this lesson, refer to figure 1. It is important to understand what our wreath consists of. From the figure we can see that it has three branches. The arrows indicate the direction of the branches.

Next it is important to understand the leaves' shape and how to create them. For this project, I chose abstract oblong leaves with thin tips. Figure 1 shows step-by-step how to create them.

The most important thing to remember is that creating these forms should not be difficult. You just need to use your brushes properly and effectively (read more about brush strokes [here](#)).

Now that we understand all the nuances, we can jump right in!



Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Use a compass or trace around a circular object, such as a plate, to sketch a circle with a pencil. Note that the line is broken in three places for the areas of the wreath that will have no branches (see figure 1). Do not press too hard on the paper; the line should be barely visible. After that, use an eraser or, even better, a kneadable art eraser to remove the pencil line.

Now paint the three branches of the wreath with brown. I recommend you paint each branch with a broken line, then merge it into a single line. Use a round brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2).

After the painting is dry, move on to step 2.

STEP 2



Step 2

Prepare a medium and thick green and, using a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 5 or 6), paint the leaves using the method shown in figure 1. Remember that the larger the brush, the larger the leaves will be. Practice with different brush sizes on a separate sheet of paper and choose the ideal one for your design before you begin painting your leaves.

Let the painting dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

Equip yourself with a detail brush or a round brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2). With a medium-consistency dark brown, paint stems between the leaves and branches.

Let the painting dry.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

My last step when painting is usually adding details. But since I decided not to make this project's piece particularly intricate, its last stage is instead adding some smaller leaves.

So, make a medium-consistency dark green and use a small round brush (size 3) to paint the leaves following the method shown in figure 1. Try to add them to the places with the most empty space. Some may overlap elements that have already been painted, but don't worry: this makes the wreath look more natural.

Let the painting dry.

Now paint the stems and additional details with brown and dark brown in a medium consistency using a detail brush.

The wreath of leaves is now finished.

Despite this lesson's simplicity, its principles are suitable for creating a wide variety of works. Even if you repeat the colors chosen for this project, you can still change the leaves' shape and the direction of the branches. Figure 2 shows an example.

In this wreath, two branches run in the same direction, while a third runs the opposite way. The leaves are also placed differently to create an entirely unique illustration in which the main leaves and the bigger ones

have the largest effect. You can paint the leaves however you want; the most important thing to remember is that the elements should be distributed evenly. Keep practicing, and you will love to paint simple and beautiful wreaths like this one.

Leafy Branches with Berries



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1 or 2; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

This straightforward project is proof that watercolor painting is for everyone, because anyone can make a beautiful piece with this project without having any painting experience.

It was a real discovery for me to find that leaves are a wonderful source of inspiration. I never thought that foliage could be so diverse. The colors, the shapes, the branches' structures—they're all amazing. I've fallen in love with painting leaves, and I hope you will too.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

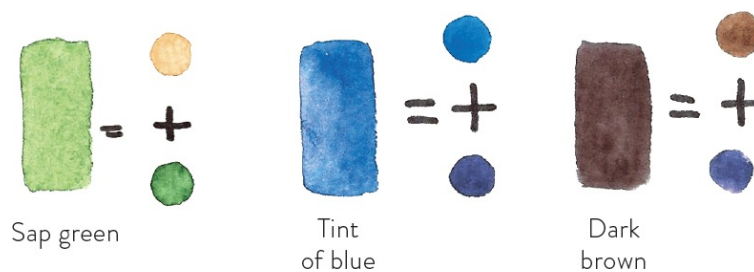




Figure 1

Before we begin, let's make some preparations. Our pattern will be a square shape, so with the help of masking tape, define the area you intend to paint.

Now let's look at two ways of painting simple leaves (see figure 2).

With the first method, simply press the brush onto the paper, stretch the brush over it and lift it up to get half of a leaf. Create the second half of the leaf next to it using the same method. (Read more about how to effectively use brush strokes [here](#).)

The second way, in my opinion, is easier. Paint the contour of the leaf with the tip of a brush. Without waiting for the paint to dry, paint the inside of the contour with the same color.

You can choose either way of painting, but I recommend you try both. Personally, I like the first way because it lets me use the brushes more effectively.

Now let's paint the pattern itself.



Figure 2

STEP 1

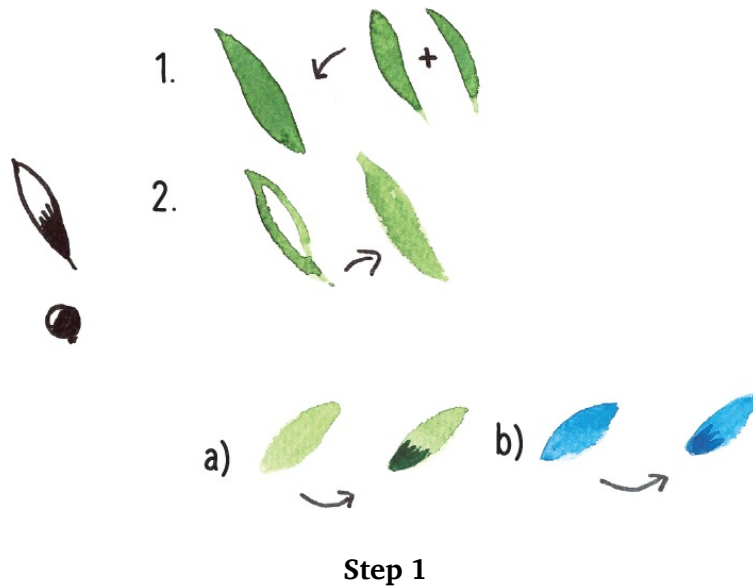


Figure 1 shows a sketch of the pattern. However, I recommend you don't draw a full sketch in pencil. It is enough, in my opinion, to draw just the basic branches.

TIP: Remember that after applying a watercolor layer over a pencil sketch, you cannot erase the pencil lines. So when drawing any sketch with a pencil, do it lightly and don't press hard on the paper so that you will not leave any marks.

Paint the branches with a medium-consistency brown, as shown in the example. Use a small round brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2).

Allow the layer to dry.

STEP 2



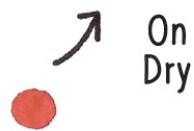
Step 2

Using one of the methods explained [here](#), paint leaves in sap green and ultramarine blue, as shown in the example. The consistency of the paint should be medium and the brush size also medium (size 4–6). Since some of the branches intersect and their leaves overlap, wait until the layer dries, then paint a second layer (read more about layering [here](#)).

After all the leaves have been painted, let the painting dry.

NOTE: When painting the leaves, don't be afraid to go onto the surface of the masking tape. After the work is done, you will remove the tape and, with it, everything that went beyond the area intended for your work.

STEP 3



On
Dry

Step 3

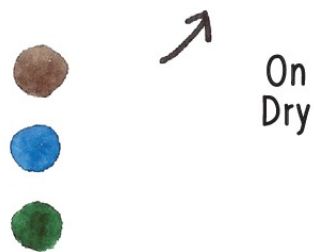
Paint the berries in a medium-consistency red with a detail brush. Leave a white area without any paint inside each berry (or inside almost all of them). These areas will show the light reflecting off the berries (read more about reserving [here](#)).

Allow the painting to dry completely.



Figure 3

STEP 4



Step 4

Now the work is almost done. We just need to add some details that will give the picture more contrast and make it interesting. Use a detail brush throughout this step and thick, saturated paint.

Step 4 shows how to add contrast to the leaves. As you can see, at the base of the leaf, another, more concentrated layer is added of the same color or of an adjacent color on the color wheel (read more about the color wheel [here](#)).

Now apply this technique to your project. Paint another layer in green and the tint of blue, as shown in the example.

Add details to the berries using dark brown and crimson. Now paint about half of the branches more clearly with dark brown.

Allow the painting to dry completely.

This project is just a drop in the ocean, one out of many thousands you can paint that are inspired by foliage. So whenever you're walking in a park or a forest, pay attention to the trees. Look at the leaves, and study the details.

I recommend you try different color combinations, even some that can't be found in nature. Also try creating different compositional solutions. Figure 3 shows a picture painted using this project's methods but with other, more creative colors and with the composition modified.

Cute Cactus



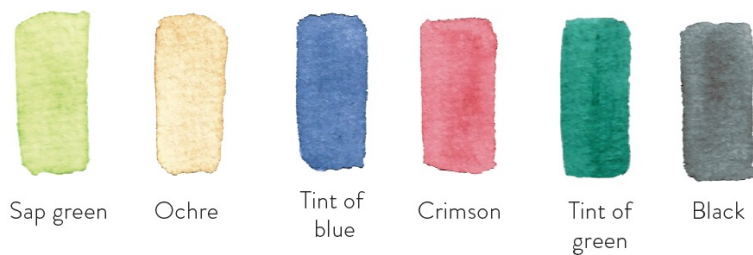
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

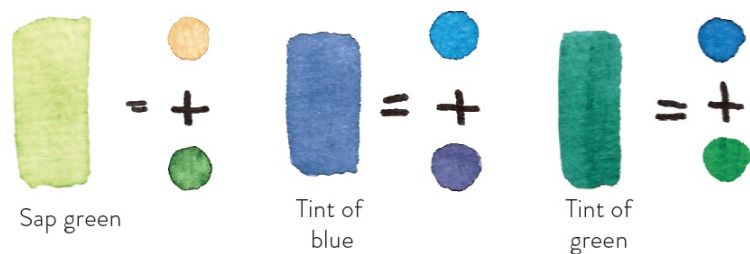
TIP: Read the step-by-step instructions before starting the project so you will know exactly where to focus your attention. Since we are using the blending technique, it's important not to hesitate between steps 1, 2 and 3.

Cacti are one of the trendiest subjects for watercolor painting today. They come in a wide variety of species, colors and sizes, from tiny potted plants to gigantic wild cacti systems. I couldn't miss this trend, as I love to paint these cuties. If you paint this thorny friend at least once, you will definitely want to do it again—they're a delight! And I promise that you will not spend more than 15 minutes on each one.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



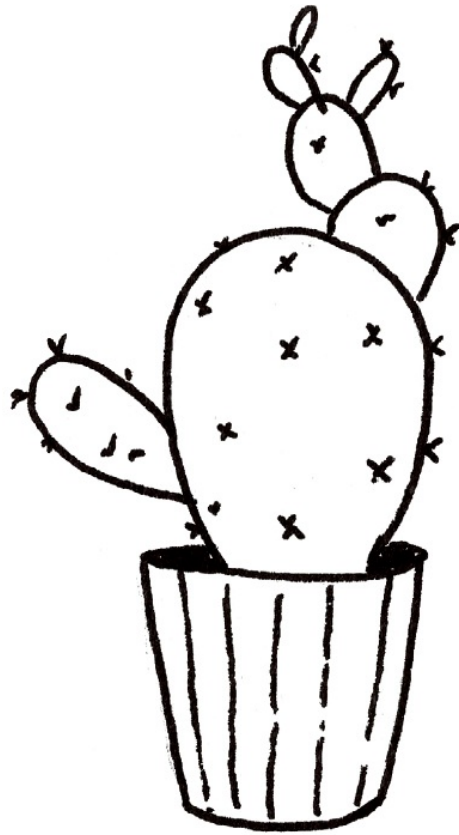


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Let's start work by making a pencil sketch on watercolor paper. Draw a light, barely visible sketch following the outline drawing in figure 1. As you can see, I don't make a detailed sketch and draw only baselines.

Once the sketch is ready, secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Using a round brush with a thin tip (size 4–6), create a base for the cactus with a watery sap green, as shown in the example.

Don't wait for this layer to dry. Just go straight to step 2.

STEP 2



Step 2

Using a round brush (size 4), add to the cactus's wet layer ochre and the tint of blue, both in a medium consistency. I recommend you add the ochre at the center of the plant and the tint of blue at its edges. (Read more about blending [here](#)).

It is not necessary to fill the entire space with these colors. Just make several touches with each, then go on to step 3.

STEP 3



Step 3

Apply a few drops of medium-thick crimson to the still-wet cactus layer.

Now allow the piece to dry completely.

Once the painting is dry, you can add a layer of shadow with tint of green in a medium consistency (read more about layering [here](#)). Use the size 4 brush again, cleaned and wet, to make the soft layer for the shadow inside of the cactus (read more about softening [here](#)).

Let the work dry completely.

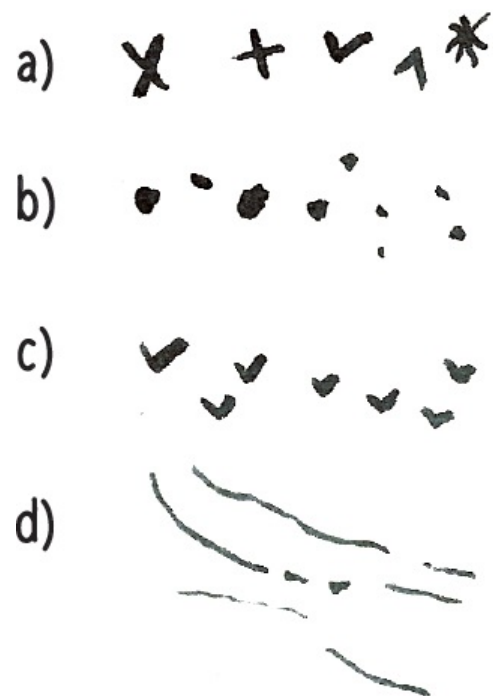


Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Now take a brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2) and paint a patterned pot with the tint of blue in a medium consistency. You can show your creativity at this stage and use your own design for the pot instead of the one I chose.

You can also add the tint of blue to the corners of the pot for shading to make the illustration look more natural.

Let the work dry.



Figure 3

STEP 5



Step 5

Our cute cactus is almost complete. Let's add some final details.

What makes a cactus recognizable? The shape of the plant, of course, but also the thorny spines. Since we're creating a stylized illustration, they can be depicted however you like—with dots, spots or ticks, for instance. Figure 2 shows examples you can use.

Take a detail brush and paint the spines in black paint of a medium or

thick consistency. Do not forget to add the needles from the outside. A few strokes will be enough.

Now change to a round brush (size 3 or 4) and paint several flowers with crimson. The paint's consistency should be creamy. You don't have to add flowers, but they look so elegant that I highly recommend you do.

Let the painting dry completely.

From the methods described in this lesson, you can create a whole collection of cacti. Why not? Or you can paint your own unique cactus.

Figure 3 shows some examples. As you can see, the color scheme is the same as this project's, but both the pots' shape and design and the cacti's shape and appearance are different. Each of these examples was created using the principles of this step-by-step lesson. You can also experiment with the colors, but I advise you use the project shades for your first painting.

Potted Plant



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush

I love to paint potted plants. They are all around us: in our homes, cafes, shops and offices. They are all so different, and each provides lots of artistic inspiration. They're a cool subject when learning how to create

very cute illustrations, and I think watercolors are a perfect medium for them. With watercolors, it's easy to show multiple shades of green by blending different colors. The plants look so natural and magical at the same time.

In this lesson, I will explain the principles of how to paint any potted plant, real or imagined, using watercolors. You will see step-by-step how fun and easy it can be.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

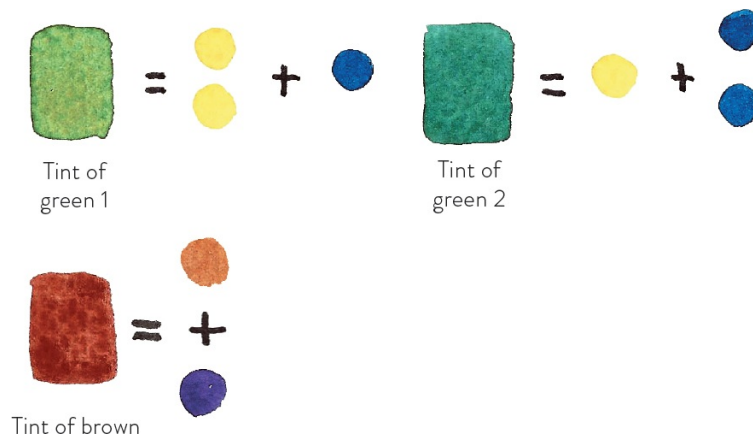




Figure 1

STEP 1

Step 1a



Step 1b



Paint a circle with sienna and fill it with the same color, as seen in figure 1.

Don't wait for the circle to dry. Instead, paint the shape of the pot very quickly, adding a top and a bottom in the same color. Use a round brush (size 4 or 5) with a thin tip.

Allow the painting to dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Add the plant's stalk with tint of green 2 using a small brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2).

STEP 3



Step 3

Paint the leaves with the tint of green 1 using a brush with a thin tip (size 3 or 4). For each leaf, add a small stem to connect it to the plant's stalk. It's not a problem if the stalk is still wet. Allow it to blend with the stems.

TIP: I recommend you blend the painted green leaves with different colors for a nice color mix. Experiment and play with blending, but limit yourself to two or three colors. If you blend too many colors, you may get a brown tint that looks a little dirty.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

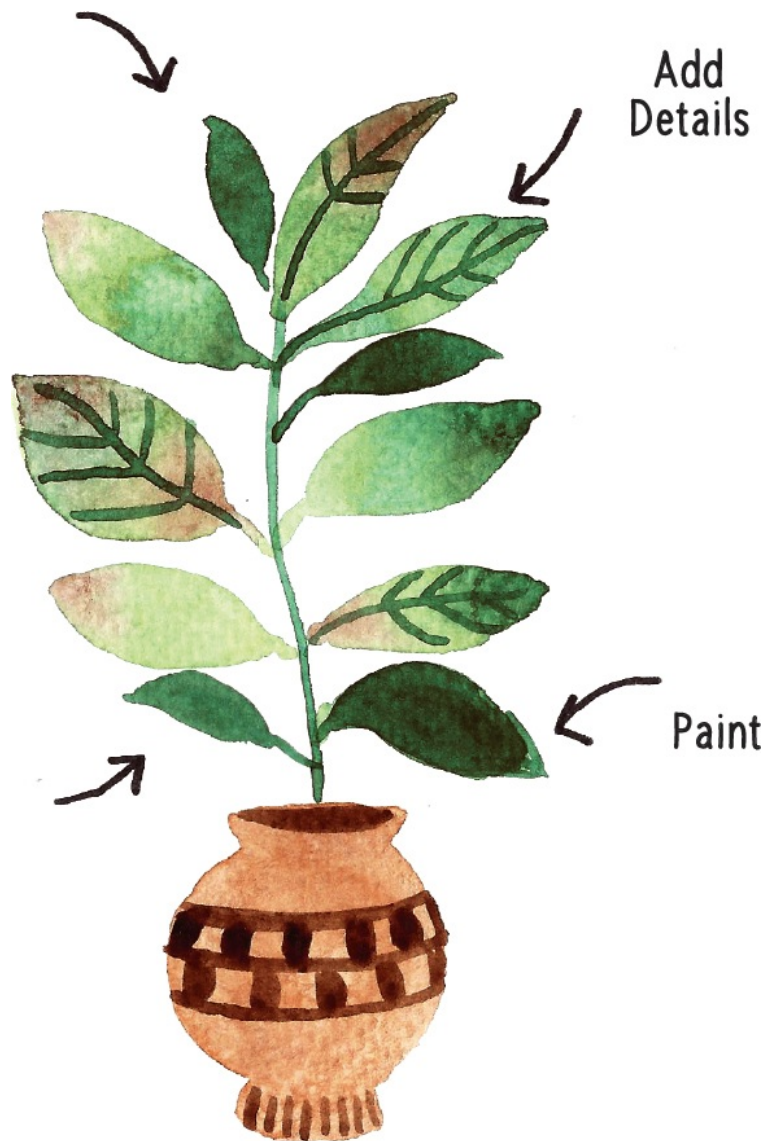
Now add brown and tint of green 2 to the still-damp layer of leaves using a medium round brush (size 4–6).

As I mentioned before, this technique is called blending, and it is widely used in watercolor painting (for more about blending, see [here](#)).

Once the leaves are dry, it's time to add details to the pot.

To make it more interesting and pretty, paint some patterns in tint of brown with a small round brush (size 1 or 2) or detail brush. The details should be visible, so the tint of brown should be saturated compared to the pot's brown base shade. We're using the layering technique here (for more about layering, see [here](#)).

STEP 5



Step 5

Now add some additional leaves using tint of green 2 to provide a stark contrast to the other leaves.

The final step is adding small details to just a few of the leaves to keep the illustration interesting. A detail brush is ideal for painting these details.



Figure 3

Try creating your own unique illustration of a potted plant. Use the concepts from this lesson, but try to play with leaf shapes and plant types. Try painting different kinds of pots and creating interesting patterns or decorations. Or how about using different colors for the pot?

You'll have many different options if you choose to paint this cute, green friend. At the same time, this is a very quick project. Within 15 minutes

you will have a pretty watercolor illustration.

Palm Leaves



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

Recently it's become very trendy to paint tropical leaves and flowers. Illustrations of them are actively used in clothing design and interior decoration as well as in packaging. So I want to share one fashion

project with you: painting palm leaves. Step-by-step, we will create a bright and colorful composition of leaves using the most effective techniques of watercolor painting. It won't take a lot of your time, and I'm sure that you'll enjoy this lesson. So let's begin.

PROJECT COLORS



Green



Yellow-green



Yellow



Blue-green

COLOR MIXING



Yellow-green



Blue-green

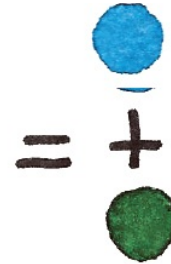
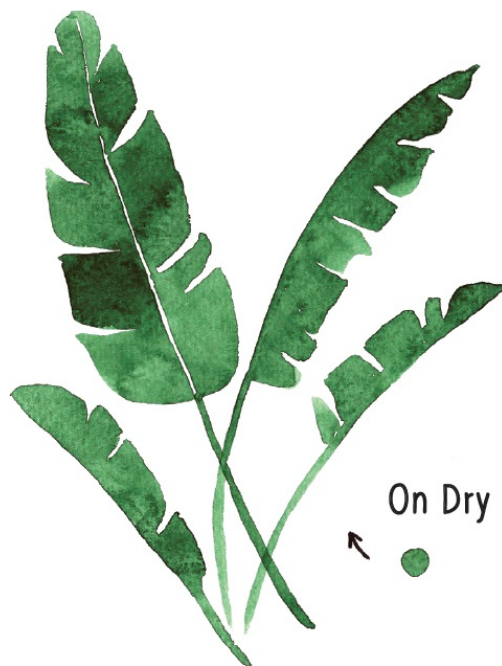




Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Before you begin, secure the sheet of paper with masking tape to your table or board.

For this project, I made a preliminary sketch with a pencil. In figure 1 you can see the composition of our project. Pay attention to how each separate leaf is drawn. In general, it is a large, regular leaf, but at the edges it is divided arbitrarily to create gaps. In the figure, too, only half of some leaves are shown.

So, let's start by making a light pencil sketch following the composition here. Next paint just some of the leaves with green as shown in the example. The consistency of the paint should be medium. Use a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4–6).

Without waiting for the layer to dry, continue to the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

For this step, work quickly, before the paint from step 1 dries. Add green, yellow-green and yellow in a medium consistency to the still-wet layer of leaves with the same brush you used in step 1. Do this by digging in the brush at certain points (read more about blending [here](#)).

Allow the layer to dry.

Paint extra leaves on top of the ones you already painted. As you can see from figure 1, parts of the leaves overlap with the previous layer's (read more about layering [here](#)), but it's also important to preserve the painting's transparency. The consistency of the paint should again be medium.

Allow the painting to dry.



Figure 2

STEP 3



Step 3

The final step is adding details. Prepare a thick blue-green and, with a detail brush, paint details and accents on the leaves, as shown in the example. Do not overload the painting with unnecessary details.

Let the painting dry completely. Now it's done.

Using the techniques and instructions presented in this lesson, you can create not only similar works with various compositions, but also separate works incorporating these types of palm leaves. Palm leaves are a very interesting subject for painting, and they're very simple at the same time. Figure 2 shows the picture I created using this lesson's methods.

Abstract Leaves



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: medium 4 or 5; large 7 or 8
- Detail brush
- Pencil (optional)

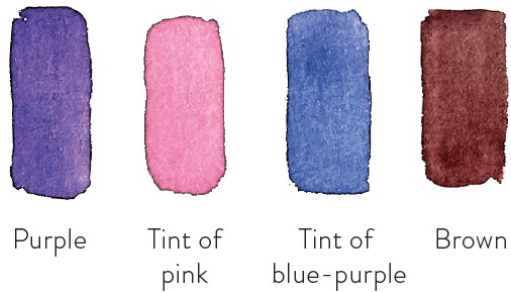
This lesson is called “Abstract Leaves” because you will not find leaves quite like these in nature. That said, though, you can most definitely draw inspiration from the natural world for your abstract design.

Honestly, abstract leaves are one of my favorite painting subjects for multiple reasons. First, I don’t always want to paint something complicated: sometimes my soul just asks for some simplicity. Second,

it's a great way to warm up before a painting session. In a word, this project is a pleasure. It's also an excellent way to practice your watercolor skills.

Now, let's take our brushes and create beauty.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

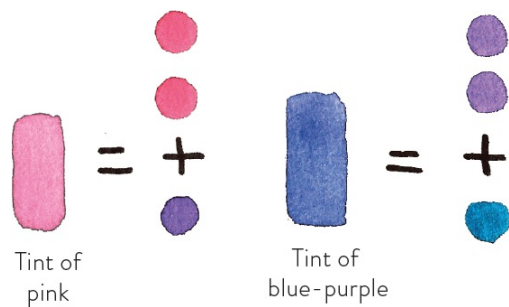


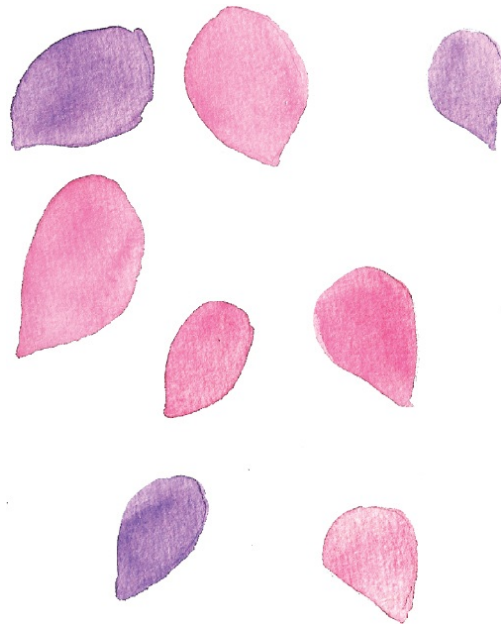


Figure 1



Figure 2

STEP 1



Step 1

Since this project is meant to appear effortless, I don't advise drawing a preliminary sketch. Just dive right in and allow yourself to give your imagination free rein. Relax and enjoy the creative process.

Figure 1 shows the outlines of the work. I think that even if you don't make a sketch, it will give you a better understanding of where we are going.

Before we start work, I want to draw your attention to the method of painting leaves I use in this lesson. Refer to figure 2.

As you can see from the example, I start by outlining. For this purpose, it is best to use the tip of a round brush. Then immediately fill in the shape of the leaf. You can also change the shape of the leaf here, for example by lengthening its tip. Since the paint does not have time to dry while you work, the shape of the leaf will be quite solid and without gaps.

NOTE: Use a round brush with a thin tip for step 1 and step 2. It is better to use a size 7 or 8 for big leaves, and size 4 or 5 for small leaves.

Now you are ready to begin! Prepare a watery purple and tint of pink, then paint several leaves with these shades, as shown in the example.

Use round brushes that correspond to the leaves' sizes.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now add more leaves with watery purple.

Let the painting dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Take a detail brush and paint the branches with the blue-purple tint in a medium consistency.

Try to make the branches thin. It is better to make a line thin to start with so that it's easier to thicken later if you need to. Note that in the example for step 3, the lines of the branches look pulled in, giving the work a sense of ease and freedom. Do not try to make the lines of the branches perfect.

Another important point is that the ends of the branches' lines enter the leaves and become their central veins. This way the leaves and branches merge, and the work looks harmonious. At this stage we're using the layering technique (read more about layering [here](#)).

Now, using your tint of pink and purple in medium consistencies, paint shadows on the leaves in their corresponding colors. For this part, use a detail brush.

Let the work dry completely, then move on to the next step.

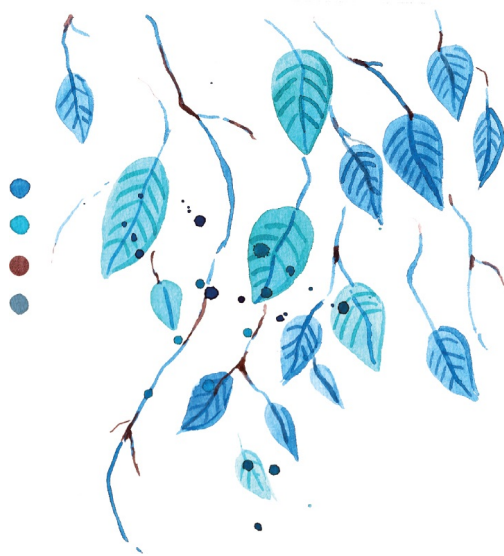


Figure 3

STEP 4



Step 4

The work is almost done. All that remains is adding the final details.

Using a detail brush, begin by painting streaks of the pink tint on the pink tint leaves and streaks of the blue-purple tint on the purple leaves. The consistency of both paints should be thick and rich. To make the work look tidy, work carefully and do not rush. Again, we are using the layering technique.

After all the streaks are painted, use the same detail brush and brown paint to add a few delicate details to the branches. I recommend you do this particularly in those places where the branches split apart. It's also appropriate for those areas where you want to condense the branch or make the branch more visible.

The final touch in this lesson is adding splatters. It's an optional step, but I think the technique adds a unique finishing touch. So, add a few splatters of the pink tint and purple using a medium round brush (size 4 or 5).

Allow the painting to dry completely.

As you can see, the work is straightforward and can be an easy warm-up. And despite its simplicity, the picture looks very nice and the branches don't betray the painting's elegance. I am sure that you will love the lesson. Why not also try other color combinations?

See the example shown in figure 3. Selecting different shades and experimenting with the placement of the branches and leaves is not only excellent practice but also a fascinating process. Don't be afraid to use the most unrealistic colors. Let bright and fabulous leafy branches appear on your watercolor paper.

Oak Tree



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape
- Eraser (optional)

In this lesson, we will look at how to paint a tree quickly with watercolors. It is not only fun and easy, but also allows you to acquire useful painting skills. Trees are included in almost all landscapes and

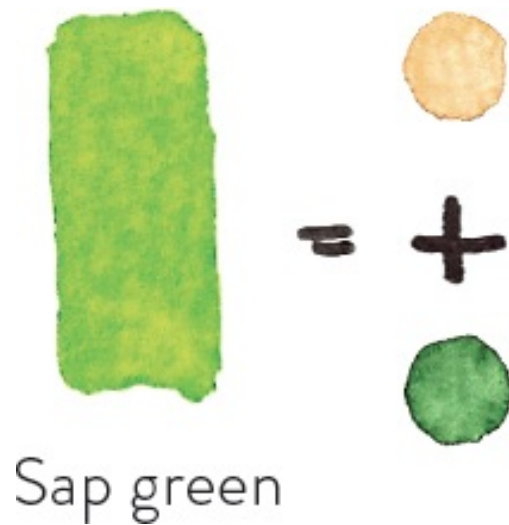
scenes for book illustrations. So you can combine this lesson with others as you continue developing your watercolor skills to create a wide variety of projects. I suggest using a fairly abstract style of painting, which will give you an impressive result in 15 minutes.

Let's look at everything step-by-step. And don't forget to enjoy the process of creation.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



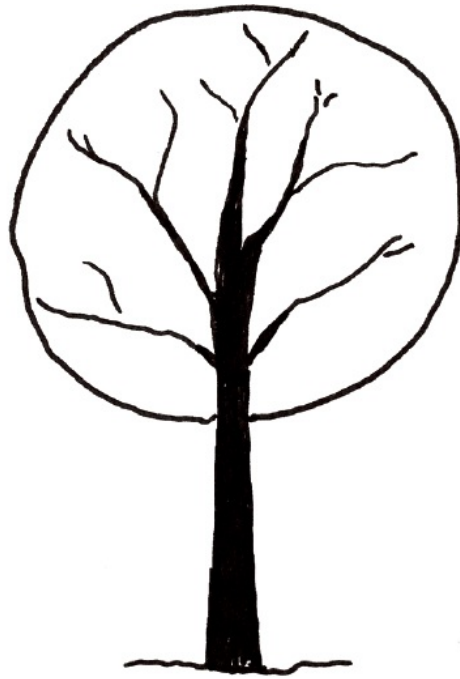
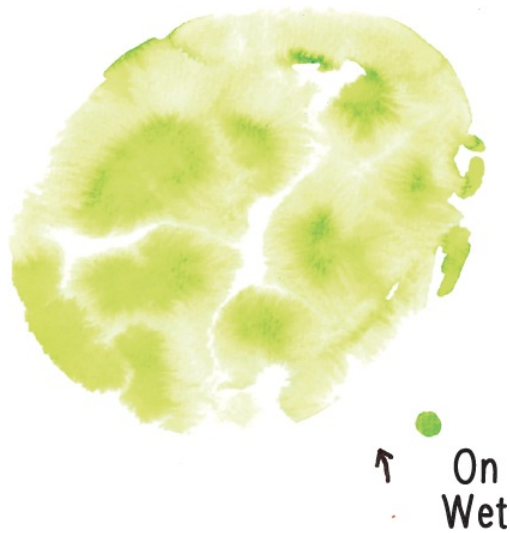


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

This lesson's techniques don't require a pencil sketch, but you can choose to very lightly sketch the outlines of the tree's crown and trunk

as well as several basic branches to feel more confident. To make the sketch softer and less visible, touch (but do not rub) the lines with an art eraser. The eraser is very soft, and just pressing to the lines will lighten them.

Secure the paper with masking tape to the surface of your table or board. Now we will paint a tree, whose crown can be thought of as a circle. Pay attention to figure 1, which shows a rough sketch of the tree.

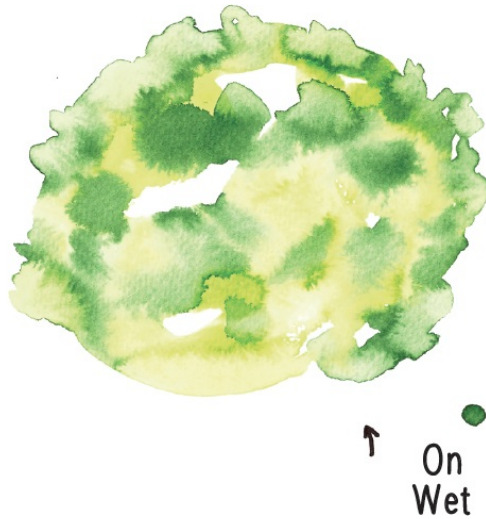
Of course, you will not find a perfectly shaped tree in nature, so we are not going to try to make our circle perfectly round. It's needed only to make the tree shape easier to create.

Now wash the circle with clean water. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6) to add sap green to the wet paper. The consistency of the paint should be watery.

In order to create a light, transparent effect, apply the paint by barely touching the brush to the surface of the paper. The paint will spread over the wet surface by itself. Be sure not to fill the entire area of the tree crown; leave some parts of it unpainted (read more about painting on wet [here](#)).

Don't wait for the layer to dry. Go on to step 2.

STEP 2

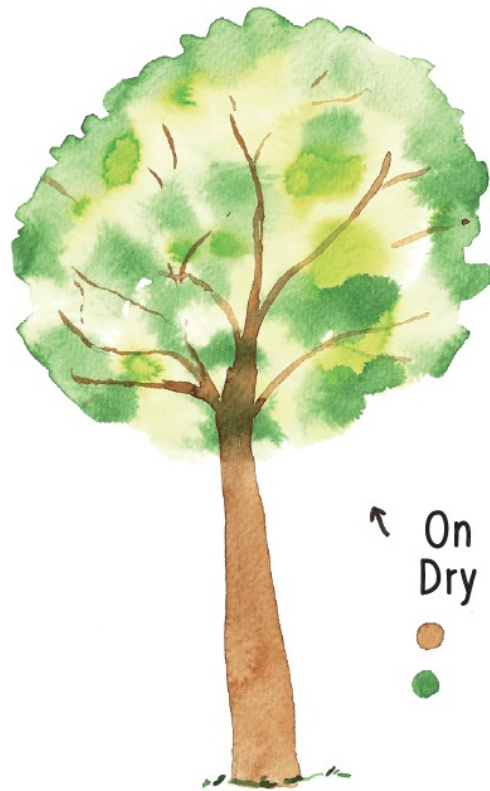


Step 2

Add green in a medium consistency to the still-wet crown of the tree. To do this, touch the brush in several places so that the paint blends itself in (read more about blending [here](#)). Use a medium round brush (size 4–6) for this step.

Let the painting dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Now that the base of the painting is done, we'll move on to add the remaining elements and details. Slowly but surely, our work will gradually turn into a painting of a tree.

Use medium-consistency sienna for the trunk and branches, as shown in figure 1. Start with the tree trunk using a medium round brush (size 5 or 6), then switch to a smaller round brush (size 2 or 3) to add the rest of the branches. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Allow the piece to dry completely.

After the trunk has dried, you can start adding grass at the base of the tree with green, as shown in the example. Use medium-consistency paint and a detail brush or small brush with a thin tip (size 2 or 3).

Let the painting dry completely.

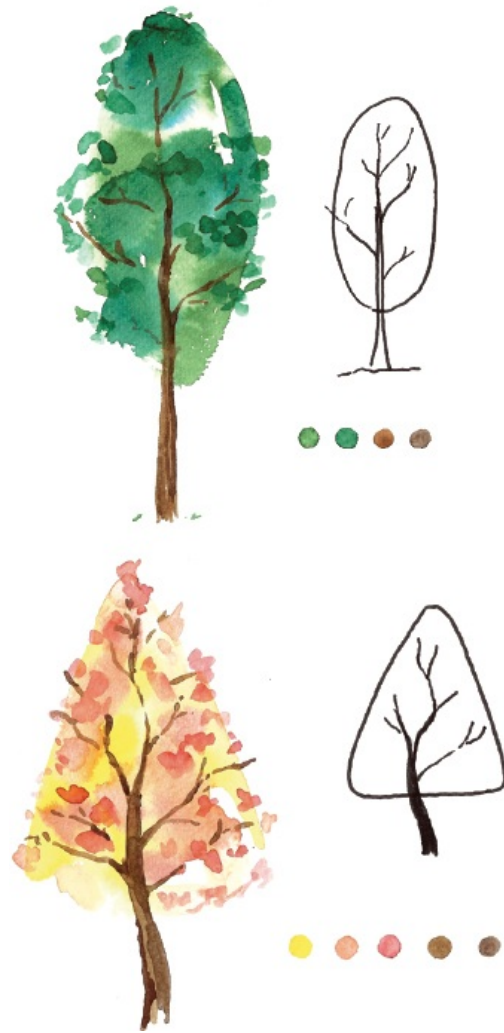


Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

For the last step, we will add shadows and details on dry layers.

Paint shadows on the trunk and branches with the brown paint. You can also add additional branches with this color if you like. Use thick paint and a detail brush.

Let the newly painted layer dry.

Now add a shadow to the leafy crown with medium-consistency green using a medium round brush (size 4–6). Note that the shadow does not overlap the entire crown layer. It should create depth but not overload the picture.

So, in this lesson we learned step-by-step how to paint a simple deciduous tree. Figure 2 shows two examples of how you can paint trees of various shapes and colors with this lesson's instructions.

For your own variations, use references (read more about references [here](#)) and be inspired by nature's diversity. References makes it easy to

choose the shape of your tree's crown, select colors and determine the characteristic features of the tree's branches. Most importantly, keep practicing and don't be afraid to experiment.

Cherry Tree in Bloom



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Filbert brush: medium 4–6 (optional)
- Detail brush
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape

When spring arrives, everything around us comes to life, especially flowering trees. Some trees bloom earlier, others later, but there is always something incredible about them. I love when sakuras bloom. The trees resemble cotton candy clouds. I am always stunned into silence admiring them, and, of course, I make sketches of them. Nature truly is the best inspiration.

So, let's paint a flowering tree. It doesn't take much time, and I am sure

that you will like the result.

PROJECT COLORS

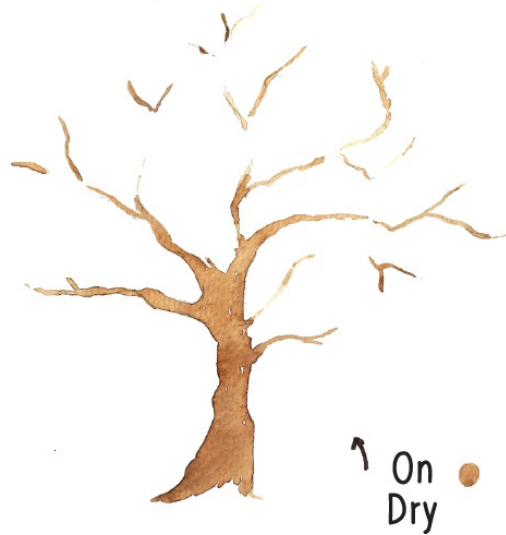


COLOR MIXING



Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Start by securing a sheet of paper with masking tape to a table or board.

Now look at figure 1, which shows an outline of a flowering tree. The sketch is very simple—just the baselines—and like all sketches for illustrative paintings, it helps us understand the simple shapes that make up an object. Details and unique characteristics can always be added after the main structure has been created.

Following the example in figure 1, paint a tree trunk and branches in sienna on dry paper. Use medium-consistency paint and a medium round brush (size 4–6).

Notice that in some places the branches seem interrupted, which makes the illustration look more natural. Also notice how the branch lines gradually narrow and become very thin at the end. You can paint their tips with a detail brush.

Let the layer dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now use rose to paint the crown of the tree, which consists of blossoms. Since the top of the tree includes multiple small shapes, you need to simply touch the brush to the paper to make small prints that will form the crown shape. You can use a medium round brush (size 4–6), but a filbert brush (size 4–6) is best as it doesn't have a thin tip. With it, you can easily create simple and soft prints. At this stage, the paint should be watery.

Note that the crown shape is not completely filled. Deliberately leaving some areas empty makes the picture look more realistic and creates a feeling of lightness.

Allow the work to dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

Our painting is already looking pretty and most definitely like a cherry tree, so let's go on to add more layers.

Paint a shadow with rose, as shown in step 3. Use medium-consistency paint and a medium round brush (size 4–6) or a filbert brush.

Allow the layer to dry.

Now change brushes. Use a small round brush (size 1–3) to add a dark brown shadow on the trunk of the tree as well as on the branches.

You can also paint additional branches, as shown in the picture. Some of the branches can extend beyond the painted crown.

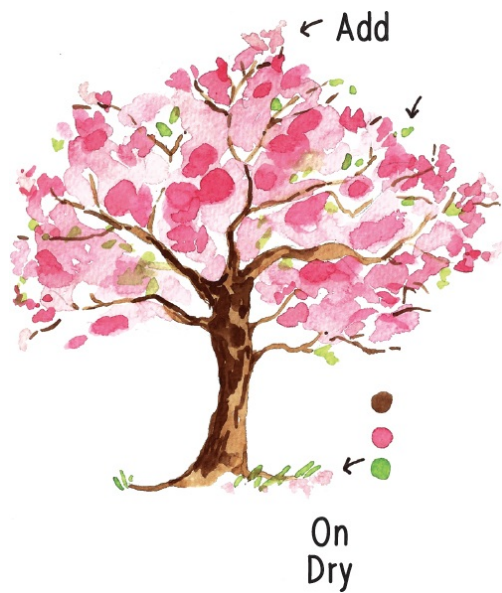
TIP: To make an object look more natural, paint a shadow on the side of it that's opposite to its lightest side.

Allow the work to completely dry.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

It's time to add the final touches and elements. The most important thing when adding them is knowing when to stop. Don't overload the painting.

Use a detail brush or small round brush (size 1 or 2) and medium-consistency paint throughout this step.

First take your brush and paint a few blades of grass and some leaves on the tree with sap green, as shown in the example. Wait for the layer to dry.

Now, using rose, add an extra layer of blossoms at the tips of the longest branches. Also add a few spots at the base of the tree with the same color. You don't have to add these fallen blossoms, but, in my opinion, they add charm.

Finally, add some dark brown branches if necessary.

Let the painting completely dry.

As you can see, painting a flowering tree is more straightforward than it seems. This painting is not only cute and beautiful but also doesn't take much time. Practice and repeat this lesson to further develop the skills and knowledge you gain from it.

What components can you change? Well, the shape of the crown and the placement of the branches to begin with. But also try experimenting with the colors.

Figure 2 shows a tree I created using this lesson's methods. I used green and changed the shape of the tree, but I followed this lesson's general principles for all of it.

This tree can also be used as a background or as a beautiful part of any landscape.



Flowers

I started painting flowers with watercolors relatively recently. It always seemed to me that they were pretty complicated, and all my attempts to paint realistic flowers were failures. At the same time, though, the flowers that I saw in parks, on the street and in shops certainly inspired me. I always wanted to immediately portray all their beauty on paper.

Then I wondered, what if I tried painting them freestyle, or “loose-style,” instead? I have to say that when I tried it, painting flowers turned into an activity full of joy and creative flow. Most importantly, I did not need to spend hours painting all the small details.

In this chapter, you’ll learn that just 10 to 15 minutes is enough time to create a masterpiece. The projects I’ve prepared for you are all different and will allow you to improve your watercolor skills, apply different techniques and practice creating floral illustrations.

Floral Pattern



SUPPLIES

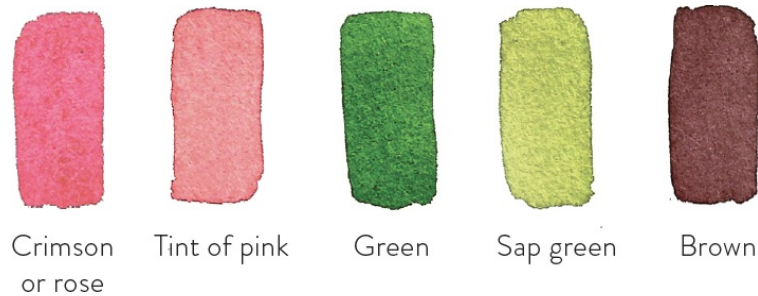
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape

When I wake up early in the morning, I like to spend an hour or two painting some kind of simple flower pattern. This is an excellent warm-up before starting my main painting session, and besides, a day that begins with a pretty and cute pattern can't go wrong. I think that you will also like to paint these simple doodles.

In this lesson I will explain how to make a simple flower pattern step-by-step and share the secrets and techniques that I consider most useful for this type of project. You will be able to create a stunning work with your

first attempt, even if you have no experience with watercolors. This lesson is also great for painting with children. Floral patterns are a wonderful subject even for the little ones, who I am sure will appreciate and love to create them.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

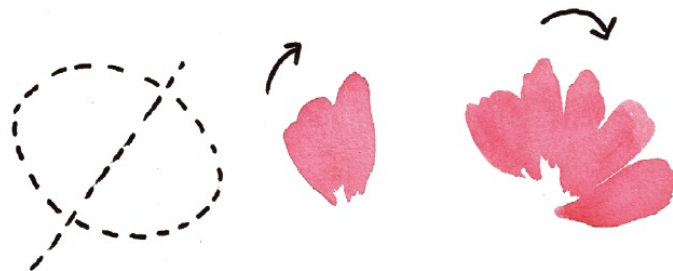
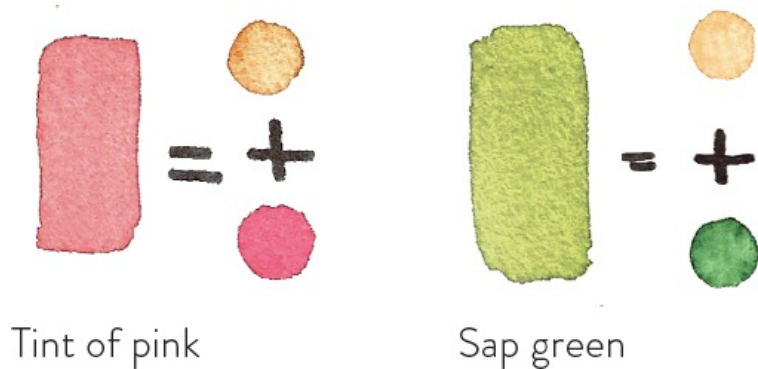


Figure 1

What is most important when painting a flower? I think it is essential to choose the right shape or type. So before you start to work, think about

what flower and leaf shapes your pattern will have. Practice and experiment on a separate sheet of paper to find the shapes you like best.

For this work, I've chosen not to use a whole flower, but only part of one. I think it will be easily recognizable as a flower and at the same time very unusual.

Pay attention to figure 1 while practicing. It shows the steps for adding petals to create a flower. A single purposeful movement of the brush is enough to do it. Press the brush against the paper and stretch it a little ahead (depending on how long the petal should be), then gently lift it up. The petal is complete. (For more about brush strokes, see [here](#).)

STEP 1



Step 1

Now that you've practiced painting petals, let's begin the project.

To create a pattern, you need to first define a work area. If you are using a sketchbook, the borders of the sheet can determine the painting area. If you're working with a regular sheet of watercolor paper, on the other hand, create a rectangular border around your area with masking tape.

Now prepare a medium-consistency crimson and use it to paint a few flowers, as shown in the example. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6)

for this step. For the example, I used the top of a vertical A4 sheet or US letter paper, which fit only four flowers, but if your painting is large, you can add more. Try to keep the distance between the flowers mostly equal.

Let the painted layer dry completely.

TIP: When creating objects in a pattern, it's important to change the angles of their placement. This is especially true for identical objects placed closely together.

STEP 2



Step 2

Change your brush to a smaller size—a size 2 or 3 round brush with a thin tip works nicely for this step. Now add small flowers to the design with a medium-consistency tint of pink. Note that their shape is different from that of the ones you painted in step 1.

At this stage, you can unleash your creative abilities and paint small flowers intuitively wherever you want. Of course, you can follow the example, but it's more interesting to try your own version.

TIP: To paint object patterns more easily and confidently, use a pencil to

mark points where you would like to place elements of the composition. Allow the painted layer to dry completely, then go to the next step.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to add leaves. This is perhaps my favorite stage of the project, when the painting turns into a pattern and becomes a holistic but still-unfinished work.

Take a detail brush or a round one with a thin tip (size 1 or 2) and paint the leaves with medium-consistency green and sap green, as shown in the example.

The point of the leaves is to fill space and create a harmonious composition.

You can also express your creativity here and paint leaves of various shapes and sizes. But remember that the simpler its form, the better a leaf will fit into the pattern. Another important point is that the leaves shouldn't be larger than the basic flowers. After all, the flowers are playing the lead in this work and the leaves are just the supporting cast.

Allow the piece to dry completely.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Let's paint the details. They're crucial for giving a picture a finished feel, however, I am also strongly of the opinion that they should be added sparingly and only if they will improve the overall painting.

To begin, add specks to each flower with a medium-consistency brown (read more about layering [here](#)).

Now prepare a medium-consistency tint of pink and add spots of various sizes to the pattern. Use a detail brush or a round brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2). They're not required elements, but like the leaves, the specks make the composition more delicate, so I encourage you to add

them.

After the work is completely dry, remove the masking tape. Your delicate floral pattern is finished.

By practicing this lesson, you can learn to feel the rhythm of the composition, an essential skill for creating beautiful illustrations. By experimenting with the colors and shapes of the pattern's elements, you can quickly paint a lot of diverse and unique patterns (see the example of figure 2). All you need to do is follow the principles outlined in the lesson and not be afraid to experiment.

The value of patterns like this one is that they can be used on other painted objects or as patterns on fabrics and other materials.

Poppies

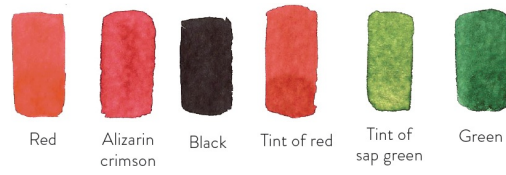


SUPPLIES

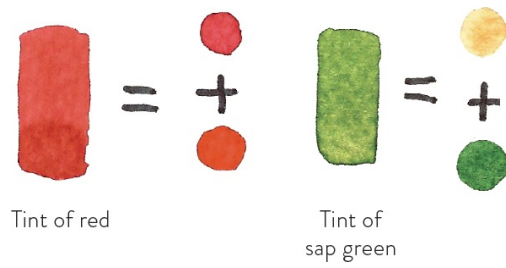
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape

In this project we will be painting poppies. It seems to me that poppies are the most frequently painted flower. Their shape is simple, especially for beginners, so these beautiful flowers are easy to paint. I love painting poppies: it is always exciting and relaxing.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



Shape 1



Shape 2

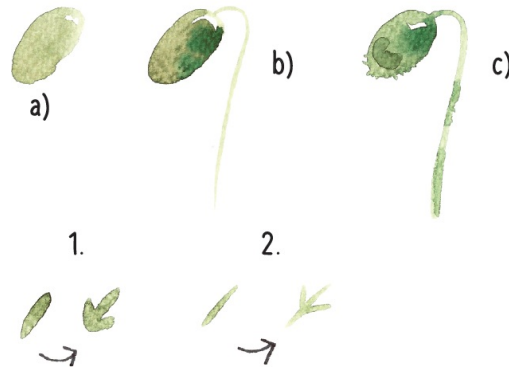


Figure 1

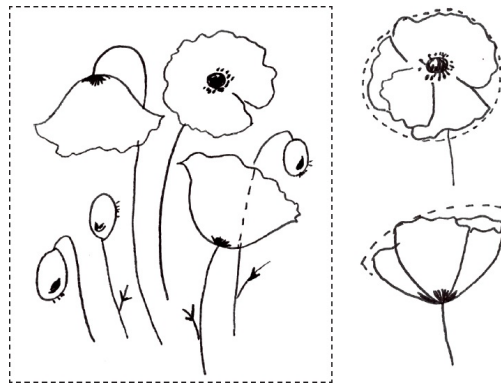


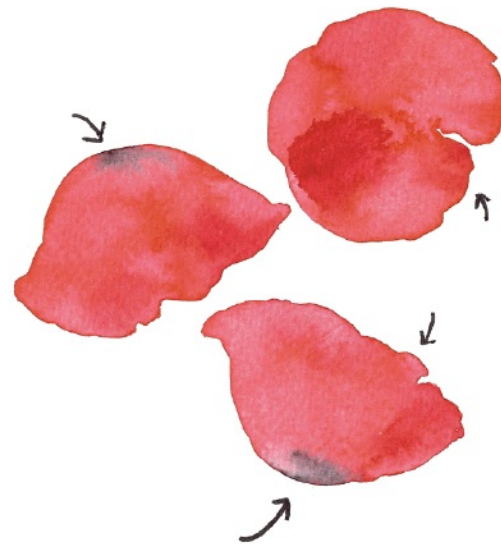
Figure 2

To paint these flowers, you have to first understand the shape of the poppy plant's flowers, buds and leaves (see figure 1). To simplify so we can focus on other aspects of this project, let's say there are two types of poppy flower shapes: open and closed. In the open shape, the flower fits into a circle. In the closed shape, it fits into a circle sector or semicircle. Of course, the flowers can be viewed from different angles, so these two shapes might change slightly.

As for the buds, the simplified form is an oval (see figure 1). You can experiment with the shape of the leaves, but I offer two options that are very easy to paint.

Now we can move on to the painting itself. Let's begin.

STEP 1



On Dry ●
On Wet ● ● ●

Step 1

Before you start, secure your paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Now let's deal with the composition of the picture (see figure 2). You can make a very light outline with a pencil following this composition, or you can not make a pencil sketch at all. Personally, I prefer to paint without sketches.

To start, paint three flower shapes in red. Use medium-consistency paint and a medium round brush (size 4–6).

Without waiting for the layer to dry, add alizarin crimson, black and the tint of red to the still-wet painting, as shown in the example. To do this, just touch each specific area with the brush. The paint will mix and spread out on its own when it hits the wet layer (read more about blending [here](#)).

Allow the painting to dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now we will paint the stems and buds of the poppies. Prepare a medium-consistency tint of sap green, and paint the buds following the example using your medium-size brush again. Next use a small round brush (size 1 or 2) to paint the stems of the flowers and buds. Try to make them thin: you can add thickness if necessary later. Work quickly but carefully.

Now add green to the base of the buds on the still-wet layer. The paint will create a very beautiful effect as it spreads out.

Let the painting dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Take a small round brush (size 2 or 3) and add a layer of folds to the petals with alizarin crimson. Use thick paint so that the layer is visible against the saturated base of the background (read more about layering [here](#)).

Now, again using layering, paint details on the stems and buds in green with a detail brush. The consistency of the paint should be medium.

Don't add too many details to the painting. Each brush stroke should be justified and improve the painting or make some well-defined emphasis.

Allow the painting to dry.



Figure 3

STEP 4



Step 4

It's time for the last step. For this step, paint everything on dry with a

detail brush (read more about painting on dry [here](#)).

Since there is an open flower in the composition, paint its core with a thick, saturated black.

Add one of my two versions of leaves with tint of sap green (see figure 1) in a medium consistency.

Now add just a few accents to the stems and buds with a thick, saturated green.

Allow the painting to dry.

Finally, add splatters of alizarin crimson and green. This is an optional step, but I highly recommend making a few splatters so that the painting will look even more creative. You can also make the splatters with different colors.

Now the poppies are done!

This project is not only uncomplicated, as you can see for yourself, but also very colorful. Using the same techniques, you can create many different compositions with poppies (see figure 3). And although these flowers are red, you can also do this project with various shades of orange, pink and red. It's a great opportunity to delve into working with different shades.

Sunflower



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4–6
- Angle brush (optional)
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Compass, or two differently sized round objects

A sunflower is a small piece of the sun, which always gives warmth and joy to the soul. I love how regal and majestic sunflowers are. They are also easily recognizable with only minimal details, which is very important for creating illustrations.

This project offers a step-by-step method of creating a sunflower using watercolors. Of course, there are many ways to paint this beautiful flower, but with this lesson we'll limit ourselves to a quick and

straightforward method—because 15 minutes is enough to create a masterpiece. So let's begin!

PROJECT COLORS

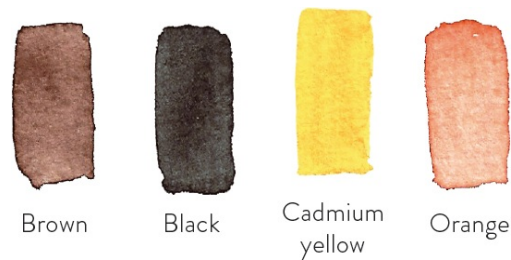


Figure 1

If you have ever looked at a sunflower closely, you might have noticed that the core of the flower is actually a large disk and that, roughly speaking, the petals are attached to the core in several layers in an almost complete circle. Figure 1 shows a sunflower outline like this. Reference it to draw your own pencil sketch of a sunflower.

I advise you to draw two circles for your sketch: a larger one to mark how far the petals will reach out and a smaller one for the core of the sunflower. Use a compass or trace around two circular objects of different sizes to draw them. If you want to be even more confident about your painting, you can make a more detailed sketch.

Now secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

STEP 1



Step 1

Once the sketch is ready, you can begin painting. Take a medium round brush (size 4–6) and wash the smaller circle, which will be the core of the sunflower, with clean water. Add brown to the still-wet paper, filling the entire shape with paint and working especially carefully around the edges (if necessary, use a size 2–3 round brush with a thin tip). The paint's consistency should be medium. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Don't wait for the layer to dry. Jump to step 2.

STEP 2



Step 2

On the still-wet circle layer, add a medium-thick black using a thin-tipped small brush (size 3). Gently run the brush over the wet paper, and don't make any unnecessary movements. Note that the core's edge and middle are darker than its center.

I don't recommend adding much black paint; if you do, the core will be too dark. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Let the painting dry.



Figure 2



Figure 3

STEP 3



Step 3

Now it's time to add petals.

Paint each petal with medium-consistency cadmium yellow and orange in two steps. First, paint the base with yellow, then, while it's still wet, add orange at the outer edge of the petal while it's still wet with just a touch of the brush (see figure 2). Use a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4–6) or an angle brush.

Paint the petals close to one another, and don't try to make them identical or perfect. Figure 3 shows several forms of sunflower petals, but I also recommend you use a photo as a reference to make a variety of petal shapes.

Let the layer dry.



Figure 4

STEP 4



Step 4

Now your sunflower painting is almost done. You just need to add a few last details with the layering technique (read more about layering [here](#)). Use medium-consistency paint and a small brush with a thin tip (size 2 or 3) throughout this step.

Paint the lower-level petals in cadmium yellow. Add the petals to the

emptiest places so that they appear to be below the first level of petals and make the flower more realistic and substantial.

Let the layer dry.

Now add some orange stripes to the petals using the tip of the brush. These are the small folds in the petals.

Using black and brown, add details to the core of the sunflower, like spots or dots.

Remember that details should emphasize an object's features but in no case overwhelm the overall painting.

The final touch is splattering. This is not necessary, but in my opinion it's a very useful technique in freestyle watercolor painting and often looks particularly good in flower paintings. So, make a few splatters of orange or yellow paint.

Our work is done.

Painting sunflowers is addictive—once you've done one, you'll keep on creating wondrous varieties of this stunningly beautiful flower. A sunflower painting like this teems with positive vibes and will definitely brighten up any room!

Wreath of Flowers



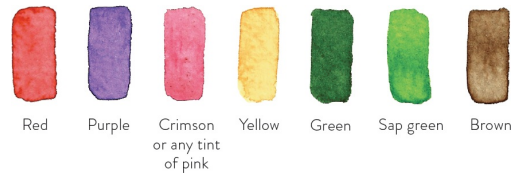
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape (optional)
- Compass, or any round object
- Eraser

If you want to paint something light and cute or liven up gloomy weather, this wreath is a perfect fit. It will add beauty to your day and fill with it with light and bright colors. Just a few steps, and you'll be looking at a true masterpiece!

The instructions and tips in this lesson will make the creative process as easy and enjoyable as possible. Let's start.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



Figure 1

Before starting, observe what the wreath consists of (see figure 1) so that you can do the work more thoughtfully.

In the small image, the arrows indicate the directions of the branches.

STEP 1



Step 1

Use a compass or trace around any circular object with a pencil to sketch a circle. This will be the base for our wreath.

Next, rub the pencil line with an eraser at the places the flowers will be and where the two branches will diverge to form a free area—that is, the upper part of the circle (see the sketch in figure 1). If you like, secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Prepare medium-thick paint in the following shades: red, purple, crimson and yellow. Now paint the flowers with the colors corresponding to the ones in figure 1. Use a small or medium round brush (size 2–6).

Note that the smaller the flower, the smaller the brush you need. To make sure you choose the perfect one for each type of flower, practice with different size brushes on a separate sheet of watercolor or office paper.

Now add a little yellow at the center of the still-wet red flower. Then add a richer crimson to the centers of the crimson flowers. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Allow the layer to dry completely, then go to the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

It's now time to add the leaves.

Prepare green and sap green paint in a medium consistency. Next, take a round brush with a thin tip (size 4–6) and paint the leaves sap green, as

shown in the example. Work quickly so that the leaves do not have time to dry before the next step. Try to make them different sizes to give the work a more natural look.

Now add a little green to each still-wet leaf.

Let the painting dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

At this stage we will combine all the elements into one wreath. To do this, take a detail brush and paint all the branches and stems in green. The paint should be medium-thick. Allow the paint to dry completely.

Now, with the same color and brush, paint additional leaves, as shown in the example. Note that in some places these leaves overlap elements that have already been painted (read more about layering [here](#)).

After the painting has completely dried, you're ready for the final step.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Our work is almost complete—we just need to add a few finishing touches. Prepare medium-consistency purple, crimson and brown. Now take a detail brush and add small details with the appropriate colors, as shown in the example.

Work intuitively at this stage: add elements where you feel they are needed. You can also add some crimson dots to complete the composition. This is an optional step, but I often add them and recommend you try.

Our project is done!

Despite the work's simplicity, you can learn a lot by practicing and experimenting with this project. Use the same colors as in the lesson at first to gain confidence, then try changing the colors, the direction of the branches and the placement of the elements (figure 2 shows one example). Making these alterations completely changes the overall look of the picture. Also experiment with the shape of the flowers and leaves.

I hope that you love to paint such bright wreaths and that they will decorate not only your life but also those of the people around you.

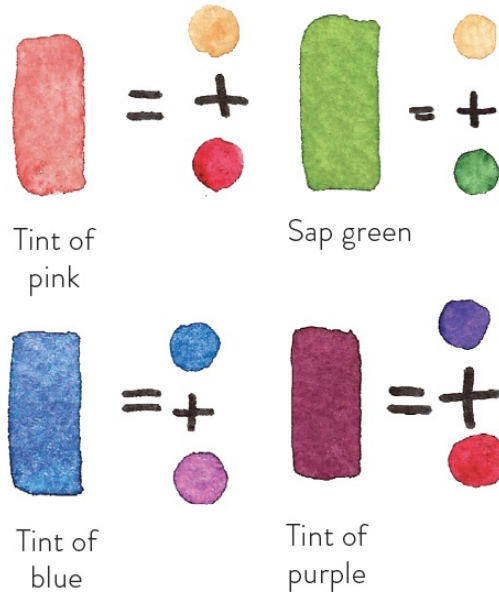
Blooms and Berries



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4–6; large 7 or 8
- Detail brush

COLOR MIXING

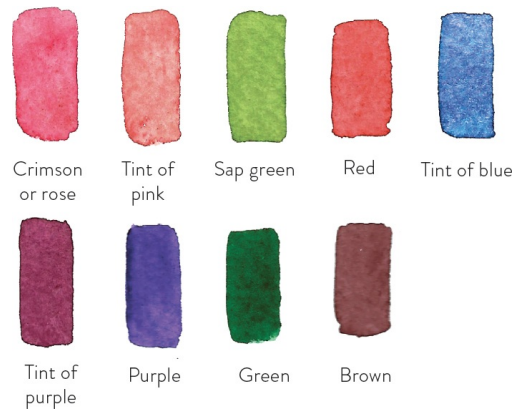


This project features a very unusual combination at first glance: flowers and berries. But they're precisely what florists often combine for bouquets and festive decorations.

For some time, I've noticed that when painting a bouquet, wreath or any other floral composition, I want to add several branches or bunches of berries to the work. These elements, as well as leaves, can complete the composition, making it more elegant and harmonious.

I have broken down the process of creating this arrangement so that you can very easily, step-by-step, re-create the work as well as understand the principles behind it.

PROJECT COLORS



TIP: Before you start work on a project, be sure to read its complete step-by-step instructions.



Figure 1

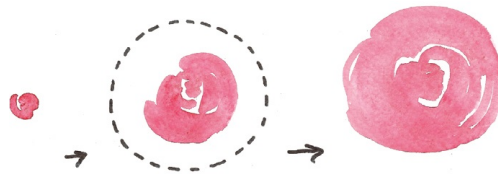


Figure 2

STEP 1



Step 1

I do not recommend making a preliminary sketch for this project, but to help you better understand the composition, I'm showing you an outline of the steps in figure 1.

To begin, use a large, thin-tipped round brush (size 7 or 8) and medium-consistency crimson to paint the three main flowers.

Refer to figure 2 to paint the flowers freestyle. Start each from the center, then move outward from the middle to add the petals gradually (as if increasing the petals). At the same time, leave some spaces inside the flower shape free from paint. This will make the work more interesting.

NOTE: Each flower is generally round. Even if the edges of your flowers are not perfect, still try to make them round.

Once you're done, immediately go to step 2.

STEP 2



Step 2

Add a little tint of pink in a medium consistency to the still-wet layer. To do this, touch the wet layer several times with a thin-tipped medium round brush (size 4–6), and allow the paint to spread itself over the wet surface. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Let the work dry completely.

Now prepare sap green in a medium consistency and paint the leaves and stems as shown in the example. I advise using the tip of a size 4 or 5 round brush to paint a beautiful and thin stalk.

Now let the painting dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to add berries. Make medium-consistency red, tint of blue and tint of purple paint.

Now paint the berries, following the colors shown in the example, with a small round brush (size 2 or 3).

NOTE: Look at how the insides of almost all the berries have an unpainted area. This is how we show their highlights, giving the work much more depth and realism. (Read more about reserving [here](#).)

Now, using crimson in a medium consistency and the same brush, add a few petals to each of the flowers (read more about layering [here](#)). Take care not to touch the previously painted berries.

Let the work dry, then move on to the final step.



Figure 3

STEP 4



Step 4

So, our composition already looks very pretty, but by adding details, we will complete its look. In this step, we'll use the layering technique again with medium-consistency paint.

Take a detail brush and paint the details shown in the example with the following colors: tint of blue, purple, tint of purple, green and brown.

You can also add other details, like leaves, using this palette. They're not necessary, but if your intuition tells you that something is missing, then go ahead. For example, I found it necessary to add a few crimson leaves.

The main thing is not to overdo the details. Remember that less is more.

Let the painting dry completely.

With the steps in this lesson, you will be able to create a variety of different bouquets. Play with the composition, try different flower and berry placements and also experiment with the number of flowers.

Figure 3 shows one example. As you can see, just two main flowers also looks good.

Once you gain confidence by painting works based on this lesson, I suggest you experiment. Try changing not only placements and composition, but also the colors. There is no limit for improvement: the important thing is the practice. And remember that even mistakes can teach you something new.

Vase of Flowers



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

Vases of flowers can be found in nearly any café, office or home. They make rooms more cozy and beautiful, and can contain a wide variety of flower types and arrangements.

I think they are a great source of inspiration, so I want to share with you how to paint a cute bouquet quickly and efficiently using watercolors.

Let's have a look at how to do it step-by-step.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

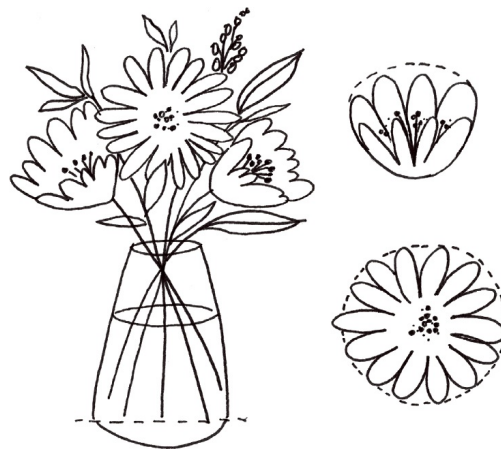


Figure 1

Before starting this project, I would like to draw your attention to the shape of the flowers we'll depict. Figure 1 shows a sketch of them and the vase we will paint. Notice that there are two different shapes of flowers depending on the flowers' locations. One shape fits into a circle and the other a circle sector. When painting your flowers, remember that each should have one of these shapes. They don't need to be perfect, but they should still be close to the shapes shown in the example.

Let's look at figure 2 to see one of the ways to create a petal. Begin by painting a petal shape, then fill it with the same color.

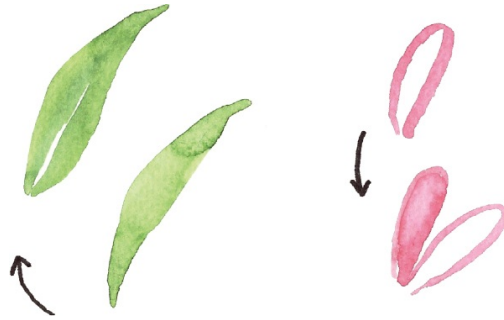
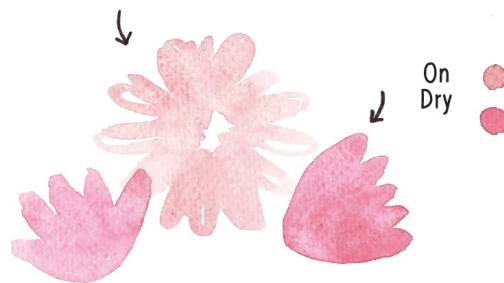


Figure 2

The same figure shows one way of painting a leaf. Paint half of the leaf first, then add the second half, but leave a small unpainted area inside.

Now let's get to painting the bouquet.

STEP 1



Step 1

Secure the watercolor paper with masking tape to your table or board. Next paint the shapes of the flowers with pink and the tint of pink, as shown in the image. The paint should be quite watery. Follow the instructions I gave earlier to paint them and use a size 4 or 5 round brush.

Allow the painted layer to dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Let's begin to paint the details of our bouquet. Paint the leaves with sap green in a medium consistency using a round brush (size 2 or 3). Now add the stem with the same color.

Allow the painted layer to dry.

While it's drying, go back to your now-dry flower shapes and add another layer to them using pink and the tint of pink, as shown in the picture. This time the paint should be a medium consistency. Next, paint the small flowers with yellow. These are small circles and don't have a perfect shape. They can also overlap with one another. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Let everything you've painted dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to add stems to the flowers. Use sap green in a medium consistency and a detail brush or round brush (size 1 or 2). I also recommend using a pencil to draw the point where all the stems will converge. Now, without any preliminary sketch, we can paint the thin lines that will be the stems of the bouquet.

Add details to the flowers in medium-consistency brown, as shown in the example.

Allow the painting to dry.

STEP 4



Step 4

The work is almost done. We only need to add some details and the vase itself, again using the layering technique.

Draw a light sketch of the vase with a pencil. Now mix a watery tint of light blue, and paint the vase using a size 1 or 2 round brush.

Next use a medium-consistency green to paint some leaves and additional details as well as a few stems for better contrast.

Allow the painting to dry completely.

Now our illustration is complete. It's lovely, isn't it?



Figure 3

This is the perfect project if you want to learn how to paint cute floral illustrations. By following my instructions and tips, you will be able to easily complete this project and paint beautiful and unique bouquets in vases.

Also try experimenting with different shades for the flowers and leaves and changing their shape and the shape of the vases.

Figure 3 is an example of a bouquet in a vase that I painted using this lesson's methods. I chose completely different shades and changed the form of the plants and the whole composition a bit. Go experiment and create.

Wildflower Bouquet



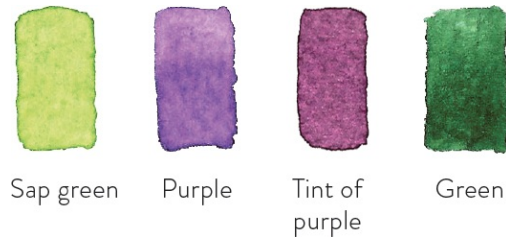
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3
- Detail brush
- Filbert brush (optional)
- Angle brush (optional)
- Masking tape (optional)

Let's paint a simple bouquet. This one is made of abstract flowers that I think look like lavender. Anyone can do this quick and fun project in 15

minutes or less, and you'll learn how to create a compositional painting of a bouquet too. This project is also an excellent foundation for painting more complex bouquets with different types of flowers. So, let's work through the project step-by-step.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

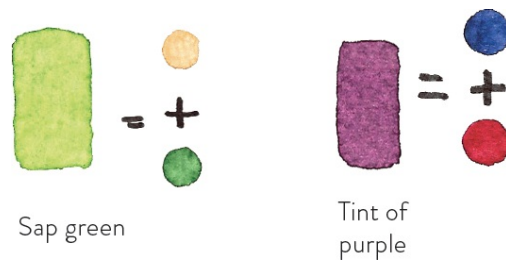




Figure 1

Since this project doesn't involve lots of water, you don't need to secure your paper with masking tape, but go ahead if you feel it will make things easier.

Before we begin painting the bouquet, let's explore our object from the point of view of simple forms. Figure 1 shows the overall composition of the work, and figure 2 shows how to paint a blooming stem and a simple leaf step-by-step.

As you can see, the bouquet is made up of flowering stems as well as some leafy ones.

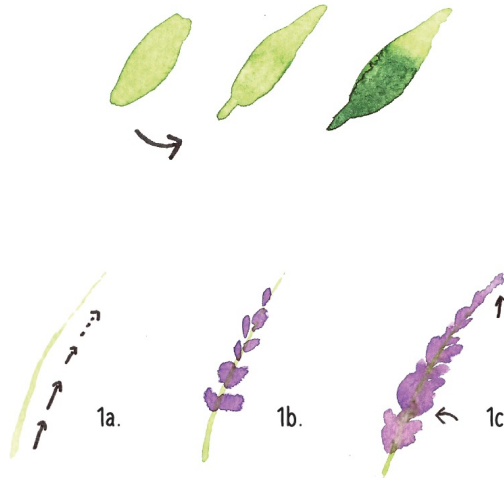


Figure 2

To paint a flowering stem easily and quickly, use a round brush or a filbert brush. First paint the stem, and then, starting from the bottom, add flowers on one side and then the other. One touch of the brush is enough to paint one flower. Since the flowers become smaller as you go up the stem, pay attention to not only your brush's angle but also the size of the area it touches. The larger the area it touches, the larger your stroke and flower will be (read more about brush strokes [here](#)).

The last step for painting your flowering stem is developing the flowers in the stem's lower and upper parts.

To paint a simple leaf, use sap green and follow the shape shown in figure 2. Using the tip of your brush, add the spine and tip of the leaf. To complete it, add a wet layer of green over everything.

Before you start painting your bouquet, practice creating the simple forms and paint a couple of flowering stems and leaves on a separate sheet of paper.

STEP 1

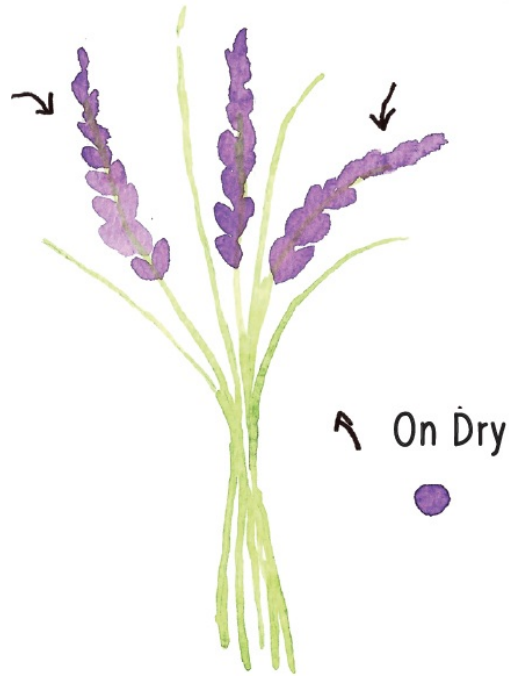


Step 1

Paint the bouquet's stems with sap green, as shown in the example. Use a brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2) and medium-consistency paint. Pay attention to how all the stems converge at one point but don't intersect. This is one type of composition for the stems in a bouquet.

Now let the paint dry.

STEP 2

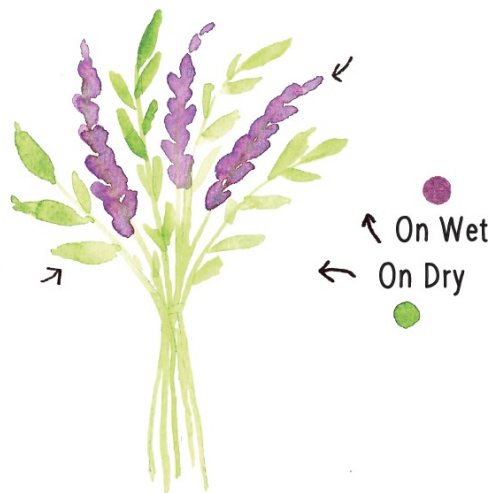


Step 2

Using a small round brush (size 2 or 3) or a filbert brush, paint purple flowers on the stems, as shown in the example. Use medium-consistency paint.

Without waiting for the layer to dry, continue to the next step.

STEP 3



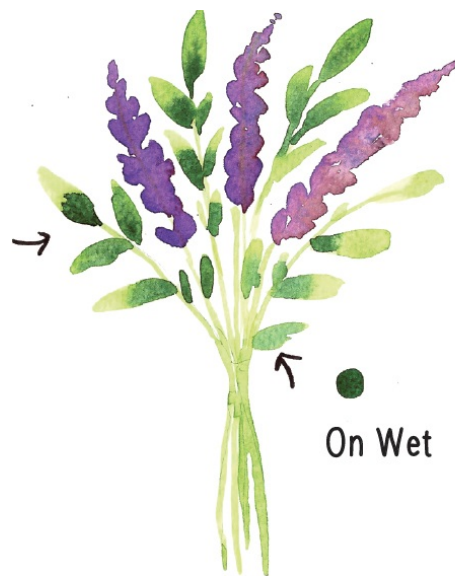
Step 3

Using the same brush as before, add the tint of purple to the still-wet layer of flowers with light touches. The consistency of the paint should be medium. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Now add sap green leaves to the remaining stems of the bouquet. Use medium-consistency paint and either a small round brush (size 1–3) or an angle brush.

Without waiting for the painted layer to dry, go to step 4.

STEP 4



Step 4

Add green to the still-wet leaves, again touching lightly with the brush. The consistency of the paint should be medium.

Allow the painting to dry completely.

STEP 5



Step 5

It's time to add details. For this step, we will use a detail brush, and the consistency of all the paints should be medium.

Add accents to the flowers with purple and the tint of purple. Make the stems more visible with green. Also paint a simple bow where all the stems converge. If necessary, paint extra leaves to make the composition more harmonious. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Let the painting dry completely.



Figure 3

Figure 3 shows a bouquet made using this lesson's techniques but with the colors changed.

Though this project is simple, I guarantee you will enjoy it. And I hope that it will inspire you to make even more beautiful creations. Don't be afraid to experiment with colors and shapes, and don't forget to enjoy the process of painting.



FRUITS AND *Sweets*

This chapter is the most delicious one in the book. In it I will show you how to quickly paint a delicious cupcake or pattern of juicy cherries—illustrations that always look vivid and yummy. In my opinion, watercolors are the perfect medium for food illustrations. Watercolors make it very easy to paint translucent layers of cream, add colorful splatters to juicy fruits or paint details on a cake. It will not be difficult for you to create any effect or emphasize any feature of your subject.

I think it is impossible not to like painting food, and food is a great subject for beginners to practice watercolors with. In just 15 minutes, you can create a beautiful and tasty illustration and enjoy the process of painting. Just choose a project that you like, prepare the required materials and follow my instructions.

I hope you will like painting food with watercolors. Perhaps you'll want to paint more detailed food illustrations later, but if you start your creative journey with these quick watercolor sketches, they will bring you even more confidence in the future.

Harvest Pumpkin



SUPPLIES

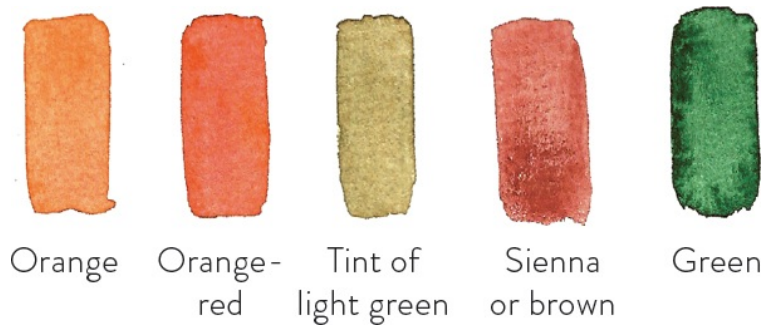
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

There is nothing better on a cold autumn evening than pumpkin pie or creamy pumpkin soup. Pumpkins are a delicious part of our lives and one of the most important fall decorations. Many varieties with beautiful

shapes and sizes can be found in farmers' markets.

I don't know about you, but I always want to paint pumpkins, especially in the fall. This fast and freestyle harvest pumpkin is one of my most beloved lessons, and I hope it will be loved by you too.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

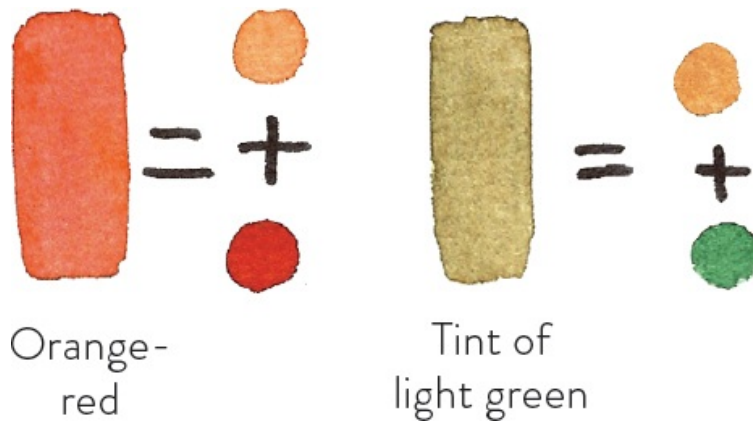




Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Let's start work on the project by making a sketch following the drawing outlines in figure 1. I advise you make a very simple sketch that includes only the main lines. Once the sketch is ready, secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board. Now let's turn to the main work.

Take a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4–6) and paint the pumpkin shape with orange, as shown in the example. The consistency of the paint should be medium. Take care to leave small areas free of paint: they'll add highlights to our pumpkin. (Read more about reserving

[here.](#))

Do not wait for the layer to dry. Go directly to the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

Prepare the orange-red paint in a medium consistency.

Paint a few upward-arching orange-red lines on the still-wet pumpkin with a thin-tipped round brush (size 1). The lines should follow the pumpkin's curves. You can also add a little orange-red at the base of the pumpkin. (Read more about blending [here.](#))

Next, paint two additional pumpkin sectors. Since these pieces are in the background, apply orange-red paint—not orange, as you did with the previous layer—on dry paper. Use the same round brush (size 1–3) and medium-consistency paint.

Let the painting dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to paint the stem, the thing that will make the pumpkin recognizable. Take the tint of light green and paint the stalk with a size 1 or 2 brush.

Our pumpkin is already becoming recognizable. Now we need to give it depth by adding shadows and strips separating its ribs, as shown in the example. To do this, use medium-thick orange-red and a detail brush or a round brush with a thin tip (size 1). (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Now let the piece dry completely.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

This step, in my opinion, is optional, but the details often give the painting a finished look.

We will use a detail brush and medium-consistency paints for this step.

Paint a few defining lines here and there with orange and sienna. Then add a few final details to the stem of the pumpkin with green. It is important not to overdo the details, so add them gradually, without rushing.

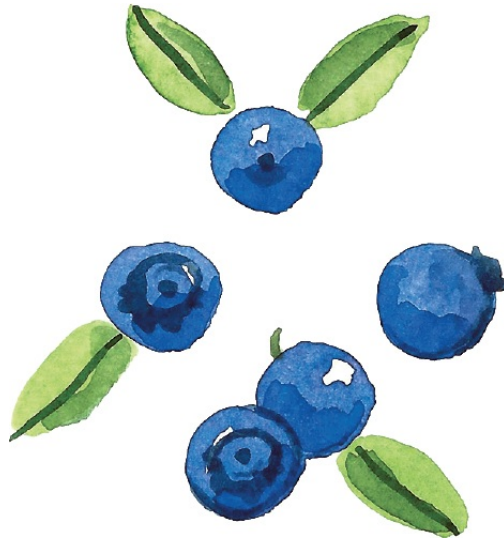
Our work is complete.

Using the methods in this lesson, you can practice creating illustrations of any kind of pumpkin.

Two examples are shown here in figure 2. As you can see, even though these pumpkins' shapes are not typical, you can still recognize them as pumpkins.

Experiment not only with the pumpkins' shape but also with color combinations. And don't forget to enjoy the process of painting.

Berries



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3
- Detail brush

In this project, I will show how effortless it is to paint bright berries like blueberries, lingonberries and gooseberries with watercolors. Using this lesson, you will be able to create pretty much any simple berry.

While painting, it's important to paint accurate, or at least approximate, shapes for the berries and leaves. It's also important to add characteristic features. With them, the illustration will be recognizable, interesting for the viewer and not overloaded with unnecessary details.

The first berries I painted were blueberries. That's why I would like to use blueberries as a simple example to show you step-by-step how to paint berries with watercolors. Let's begin!

PROJECT COLORS



Tint of
blue



Sap green



Green



Dark blue

COLOR MIXING



Tint of
blue

=

+



Sap green

=

+



Dark blue

=

+



STEP 1



Step 1

The example shows how to paint the shape. First, use tint of blue to paint the outline of a circle, then spread the paint everywhere inside the circle except for in the highlight area, as shown in figure 1. (Read more about reserving [here](#).) That's it. Repeat these steps for each berry.

The consistency of the paint should be medium. Don't make it too thick

or it will be difficult to add details on top later on. Use a size 2 or 3 round brush.

Let the layer dry.

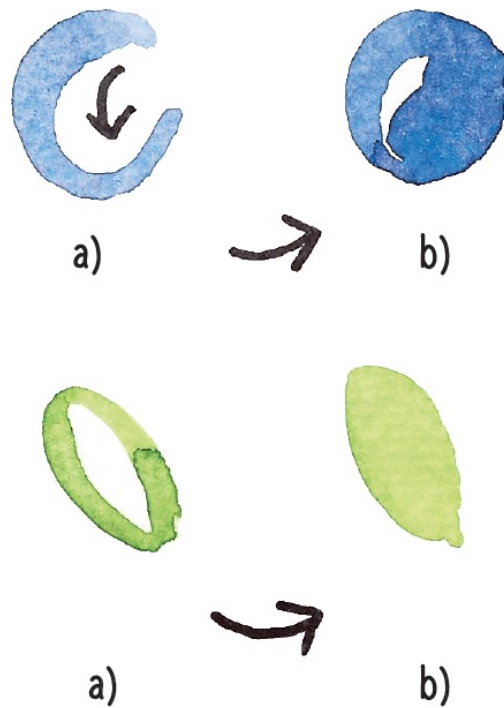
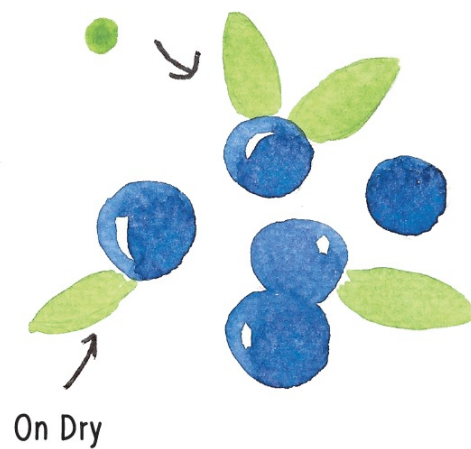


Figure 1

STEP 2



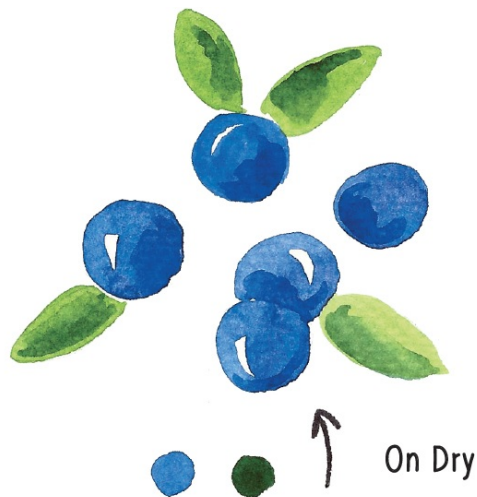
Step 2

Paint several leaves with sap green, as shown in figure 1. You can see from the picture how easy it is to create this type of leaf.

The consistency of the paint should be medium again. Continue to paint with a size 2 or 3 round brush.

Allow the layer to dry.

STEP 3

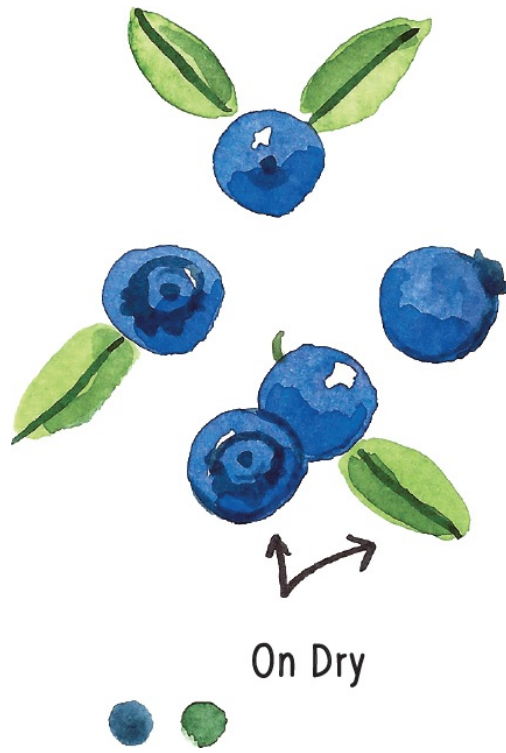


Step 3

For the berries and leaves to look three dimensional and realistic, we will add shadows to the illustration. With your tint of blue in a thick consistency, paint shadows on the berries, then add green to the leaves. Use a small round brush (size 1–3) and medium-consistency paint. Note that the shadows should be added on the sides of the berries opposite the highlight. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Let the layer dry.

STEP 4



Step 4

It's time to add the finer details.

Take a small round brush (size 1–3) or a detail brush and paint dark blue details on the berries. Then paint a few green veins on the leaves. Watch that you do not add too many details.

To make adding the details easier, you can refer to the earlier outline of the painting to understand them and how to paint them. The berries' positions also help determine which details should be painted, so it is often helpful to look at actual photos of the berries you are trying to depict.

Allow the painting to dry completely.



Figure 2

As you can see, this project is pretty straightforward and the result is captivating. Furthermore, and most importantly, if you follow this lesson's principles, you can easily paint any other simple berry, as shown in figure 2.

Follow the lesson's steps to practice with other types of berries. Match the project colors to the type of berry you choose, and make sure to pay attention to the shape of the berry and its leaves. They may differ from the shapes in the project.

For example, sea buckthorn berries are oblong, and its leaves are different too. But they're painted using the same principles and steps of this lesson.

If you go for a walk in a park or forest in the fall, you can see many different berries on bushes or covering the ground. Be inspired by nature. Pay attention to colors. Look for an interesting composition. Observe how light falls on the berries and their leaves.

I hope you enjoyed the lesson and that many other berry paintings will

follow from it.

Cherries Pattern



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: medium 4–6
- Angle brush: size 4–6 (optional)
- Detail brush
- Masking tape

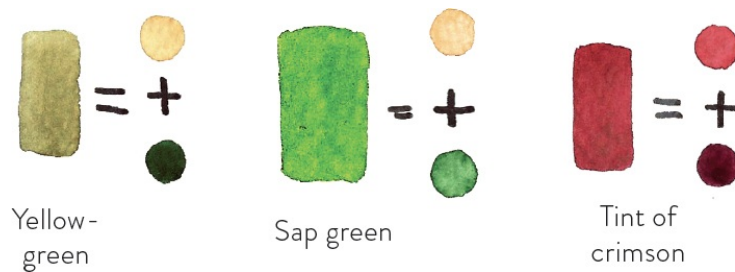
I want to share with you another deliciously juicy project. It doesn't take much time, but you will be pleasantly surprised by how easily you can create colorful illustrations.

You may ask, “Why cherries?” Really you can use any type of fruit or berry for a pattern like this one, but I personally like cherries because of their beautiful and saturated colors and because I love painting cherry stems. This illustration lets you see how interesting the same object can look from different angles and gives you the opportunity to create specific dynamics between objects.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



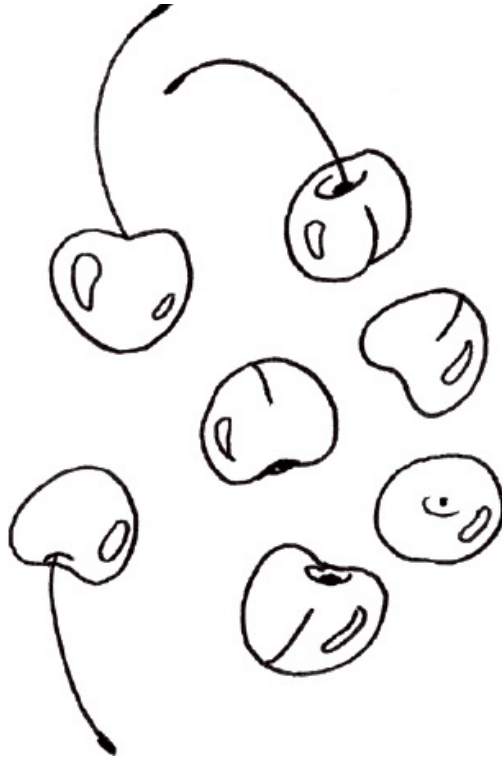


Figure 1

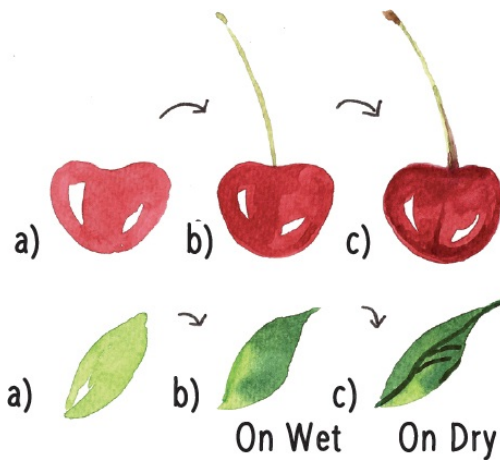


Figure 2

In figure 1 you can see a draft of different cherry shapes. Of course, this is a very rough draft, but you can tell what is meant as well as see the composition more clearly.

Before moving to the instructions, I want to explain how to paint a cherry using the layering technique (read more about layering [here](#)).

Figure 2 shows how layering begins with light tints and moves toward more saturated ones. It also shows that the cherries each have an unpainted area to show the highlights. Each cherry will have different highlights and shadows, but the principle itself will be the same for all of them.

The example also shows how to paint a cherry leaf step-by-step using the layering and blending techniques (for more about blending, see [here](#)).

Now we can begin creating this scrumptious masterpiece. Let's start!

STEP 1

Take masking tape and apply it carefully to the paper to create a rectangular or square area for painting. We will paint inside this area.

STEP 2



↑
On Dry

Step 2

Paint the first layer of cherries on dry paper with medium-consistency crimson. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6) to create the cherry shapes. Don't forget to leave an unpainted area on each cherry to make them look shiny.

Let the painting dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Now add the cherry stems with yellow-green and brown. Use a detail brush and medium-consistency paint. It's ideal if you can paint the thin line of each stem with one brush stroke. But if you're not sure the line will turn out thin enough, paint the stem with thin discontinuous lines and then add thickness gradually.

Now it's time to start the second part of this step.

Paint the leaves completely inside the work area with a watery sap green, as shown in the picture. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6) or an angle brush (size 4–6). (Read more about brush strokes [here](#).)

I don't recommend adding leaves over the cherries since they're too

translucent to cover the saturated layer of cherries.

Don't wait for the layer to dry. Go straight to the next step.

STEP 4



Step 4

Add green to the leaves by simply touching the brush to the paper and allowing the paint to spread throughout the wet layer. Avoid making unnecessary movements with the brush. The consistency of the paint should be medium.

Now you can add shadows to the cherries with crimson. The consistency

of the paint should be about medium. You can paint the shadows randomly, but it is best if they're opposite each cherry's highlight to make a good contrast.

If one cherry overlaps another, then add a layer of shadow to just one of them where they intersect. This helps create the depth you are trying to portray.

Let the picture dry.



Figure 3

STEP 5



Step 5

It's time for my favorite step: adding the details. We will paint all the details on the dry layer using a detail brush and medium-consistency paint.

Prepare the following colors: green, brown, yellow-green and the tint of crimson. You can follow the example as a guide while applying the details or just add them as you see fit. The most important thing is that the painting shouldn't be overloaded with details. They're needed only to emphasize a few features of an object. For example, you should specify where the cherry stem grows from. You could also add veins to the leaves.

Let the painting dry completely.

Your work is done. Using this method, you can paint many different fruit patterns or compositions featuring cherries, like the one shown in figure 3. Use your imagination and don't be afraid to experiment. In no time, you'll be painting works that are good enough to eat!

Oranges, Grapefruits or Lemons

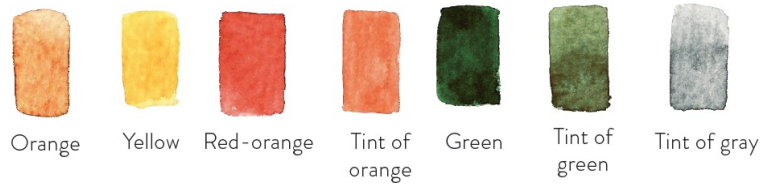


SUPPLIES

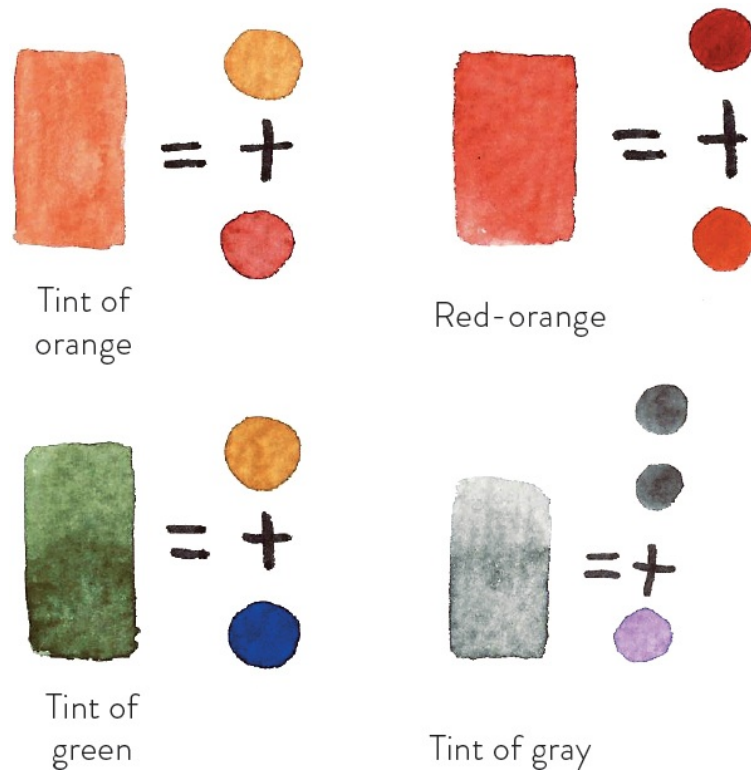
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1 or 2; medium 4–6
- Angle brush: medium 4–6 (optional)
- Detail brush (optional)
- Pencil
- Masking tape

If you want to paint something very bright, fun and simple, then you will definitely like this project's composition of citrus fruits. You can follow the steps to paint any type of citrus, but here we will be painting oranges.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



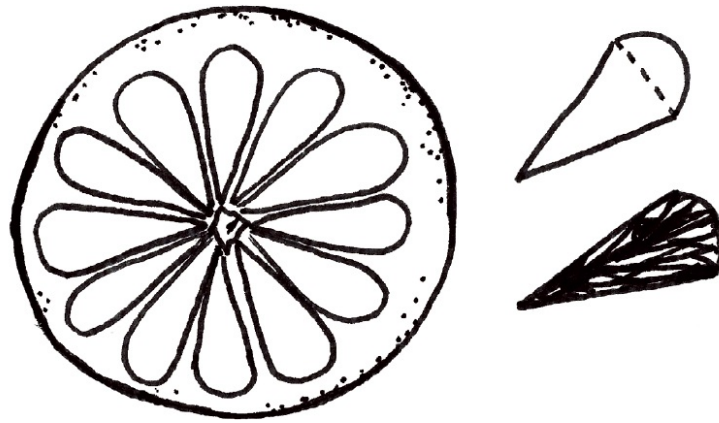


Figure 1

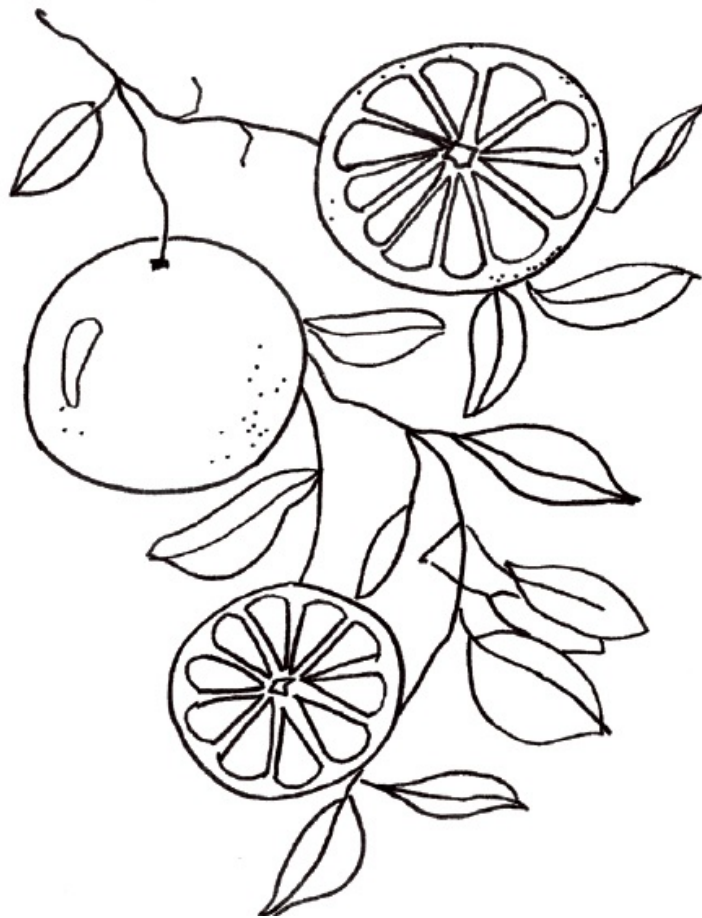


Figure 2

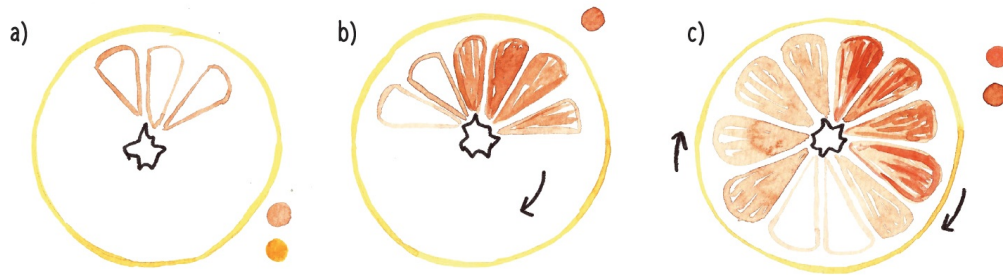


Figure 3

Before we start, I will explain how easy it is to paint half of a citrus fruit with watercolors, using an orange as an example (see figures 1, 2 and 3). As you may notice, I did not make preliminary sketches, but I still advise you to draw a circle with a pencil to make the basic shape of the orange. The circle shouldn't be perfect since we're freestyle painting.

All steps in this project are done on dry (for more about the on-dry and layering techniques, see [here](#)). To make the sliced orange look natural, we'll leave an area inside each of its segments free of paint (see figure 3). To do this, change the angle of your brush as you work.

Before beginning the project, secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Now we can start painting the oranges step-by-step.

STEP 1



Step 1

Figure 2 shows the outlines of the composition.

Now we'll begin creating the base of the picture. With a medium round brush (size 4–6), paint the single whole orange with orange. Leave an unpainted area inside of it, as shown in the example. This area will be a highlight, which, along with the shadows we'll paint later, will add depth to the orange.

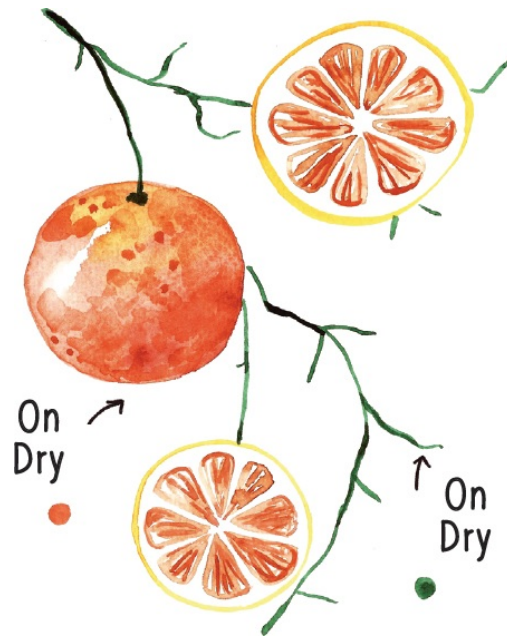
Without waiting for the layer to dry, add yellow and red-orange (read about blending [here](#)). The consistency of all these paints should be medium.

Next we'll paint the sliced oranges. Paint two circles with medium-consistency yellow. Fill the circles' segments with a watery tint of orange (see figure 3).

Work carefully and don't touch the areas you painted earlier, because they may still be wet. Remember that you can turn the painting so that it is easier to get to the necessary working areas.

Let the piece dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now paint green branches that connect all the oranges and combine the elements of the composition.

Use a small round brush (size 1 or 2) and thick paint so that the branches are well defined. Paint the lines of the branches thinly at first. You can always make them thicker, but not vice versa if you make a mistake.

Paint another layer of orange on the sliced oranges (see figure 3). The consistency of the paint should be medium.

Now add some shading to the whole orange with medium-consistency orange paint. The shading should be on the side opposite the highlight.

Use the same color to paint several specks on the fruit, as shown in the example.

Allow the painted layers to dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to add the leaves. To do this, paint the leaves on the branches with a watery tint of green. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6) or angle brush (read more about brush strokes [here](#)).

The leaves balance the composition, and their translucent color creates a mood of lightness.

Using a thin round brush (size 1) or detail brush and red-orange paint, add details to the whole and sliced oranges. The consistency of the paint should be medium. You do not need to paint too many details, as you'll risk overloading the work. It's more than enough to add accents, as shown in the example.

Paint small dots with the tint of gray inside the sliced oranges. The paint should be watery.

Wait until the work is completely dry before moving to the next step.



Figure 4

STEP 4



Step 4

Fear not! We are close to finished. All that's left is adding details.

Add another layer on top of the leaves with the tint of green. There are no specific rules for details, but I normally advise not to overload a painting and instead use additional details as accents to the illustration. But in this case, the leaves are more of a background, and you can paint an extra layer on each leaf. The paint's consistency should be medium. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6).

Now add details to the oranges with the tint of orange and red-orange. Circle the sliced oranges with orange paint. The lines shouldn't be perfect, but they do have to be thin. The consistency of the paint should be medium.

Let the painting dry.

The piece is done. I hope you liked the project and step-by-step execution. Using the principles and methods of this lesson, you can create an interesting painting consisting of different citrus fruits of either one type or a mix. For example, figure 4 shows a composition with a branch and oranges and another composition with a lemon. Anything is possible in art.

The most important skill that you can acquire from experimenting with this project is creating compositions—or, more accurately, the intuition to create compositions. This is a very useful skill.

Don't forget to enjoy the process of creating and experimenting.

Elegant Wineglass



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1 or 2; medium 4–6
- Detail brush (optional)
- Pencil
- Masking tape

Let's paint a glass of red wine. Personally, I don't drink alcohol, but I can't dispute the fact that a glass of wine is a great subject for watercolor painting. First, there is a very nice contrast between the rich shade of the wine and the translucent glass. It always looks good. Second, I just love to paint a layer of wine with watercolors. Blending watercolors allows you to create a beautifully iridescent color mixture, the very thing we see when a glass of wine is hit by light.

I hope you are excited and can't wait to start working on this project with me!

PROJECT COLORS



Gray



Crimson



Purple



Tint of
violet

COLOR MIXING

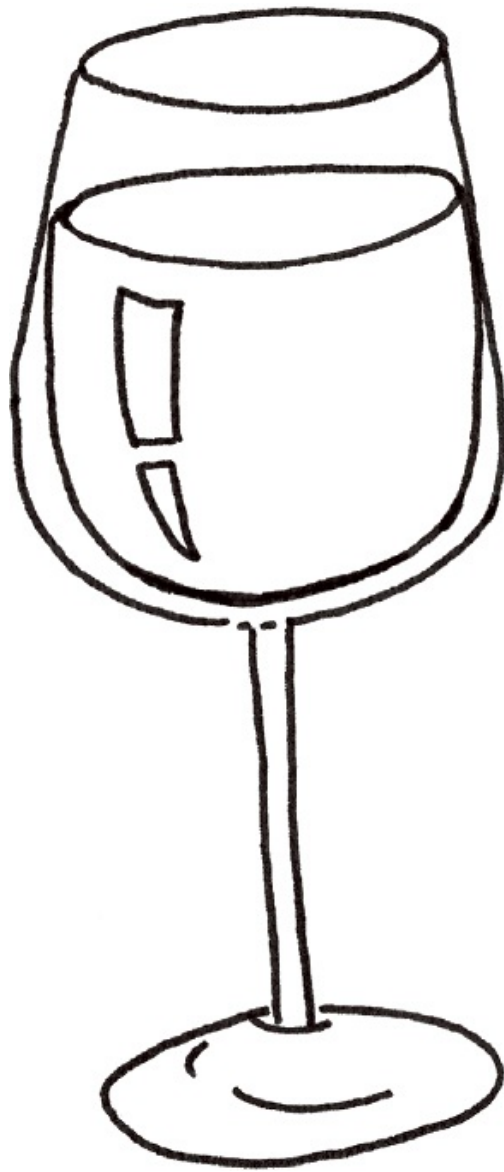
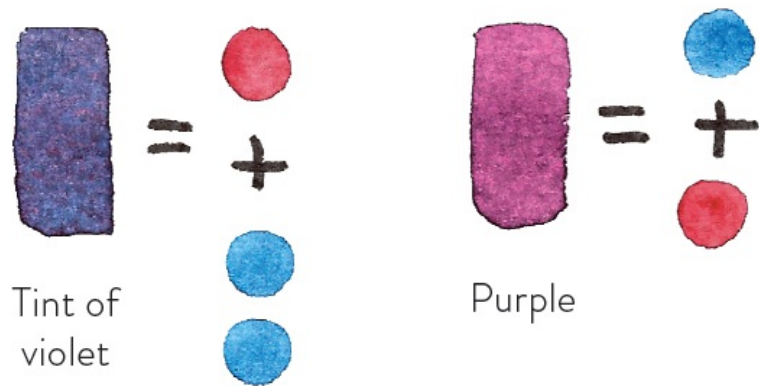
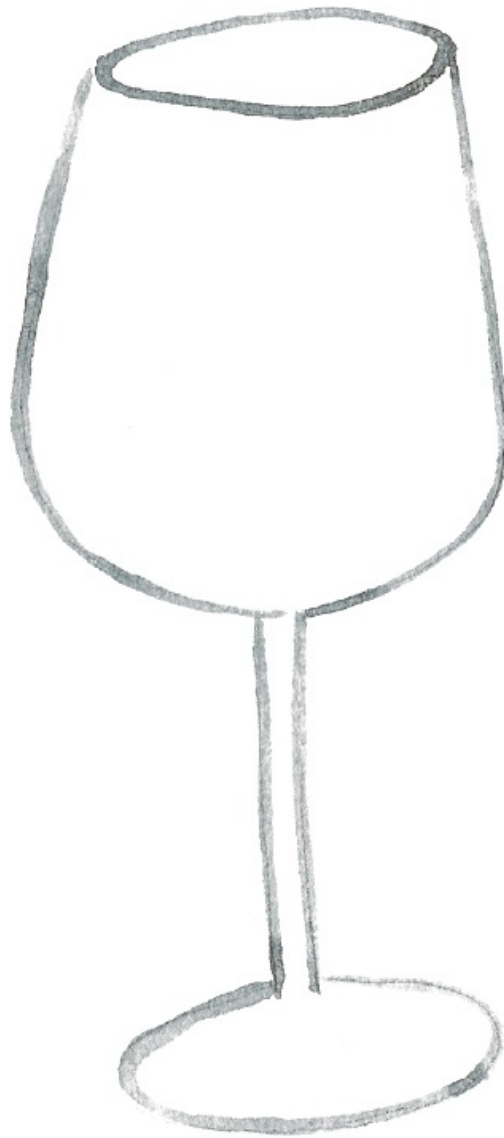


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Before you start work, make a sketch on the watercolor paper following the outline of the wineglass in figure 1. Try to make the lines almost invisible, and do not press too hard on the paper. For this whole painting, it is very important to have a light touch so that you end up with a gentle yet stunning look.

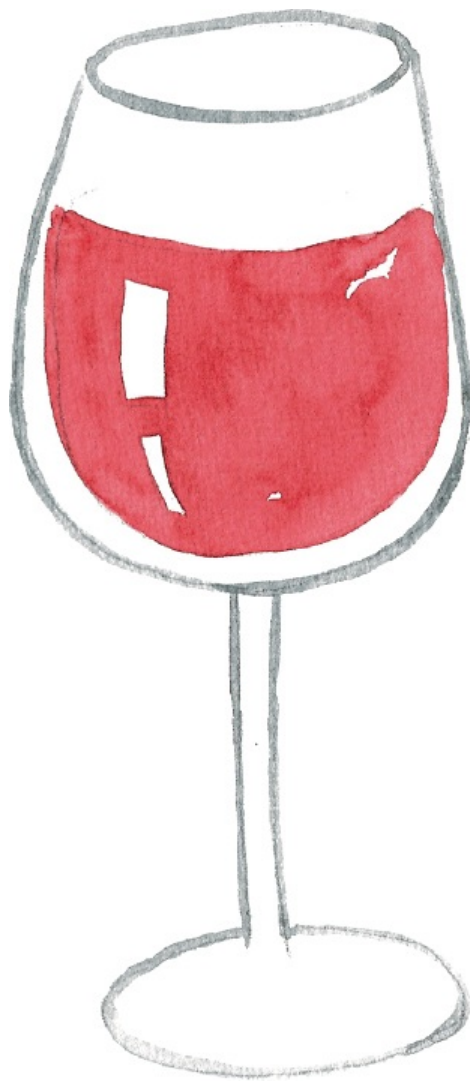
Once the sketch is ready, secure the paper with masking tape to your

table or board.

With medium-consistency gray, paint the outline of the glass using a detail brush or a round brush with a thin tip (size 1). I advise painting the contour with broken lines since it's better to make the line thin and thicken it later if needed. If the contour line is too thick, the painting will look rough.

Let the painted layer dry completely.

STEP 2



Step 2

Paint a layer of wine in medium-consistency crimson, as shown in the example. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6).

Note that inside the glass are clearly defined unpainted areas to represent the reflection of the light on the glass. Reflections appear on nearly all glass surfaces, so do not forget to make them (read more about reserving [here](#)).

Do not wait for the painting to dry. Immediately go on to the next step.

STEP 3



Step 3

Now add purple and the tint of violet to the wet layer, both in a medium consistency. Use a medium round brush (size 4–6) to make a few soft touches, and the paint will spread itself over the wet surface of the paper. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Now, with the tip of the same brush, paint another layer over the upper section of the wine with medium-consistency crimson. Again, leave an area free of paint to create a highlight.

Note that since the first lower layer of wine has not dried yet, it will mix

with this upper layer and blend into it.

The final touch of this step is adding a few drops of pure water to the still-wet surface of the wine layers (read more about water droplets [here](#)).

After the painting is completely dry, move on to the final step.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

In my opinion, the glass looks pretty flat right now. So let's add a shadow with the purple in a medium consistency, as shown in the example. Also use the same color to separate the upper part of the wine layer from the lower one (read more about layering [here](#)). Use a small round brush (size 1 or 2).

Let the layer dry.

Now paint details on the glass with watery gray paint using the same brush. Follow the example in figure 1.

The final touch is splattering. I think splattering is a very useful technique for this project and will add some charm to the design. So,

make a few bursts of crimson and tint of violet.

Our painting is complete.

Using the steps in this lesson, I suggest you continue painting glasses of wine but with different types of glasses, like a champagne flute or stemless wineglass. This is a great exercise for your imagination because you can come up with and try out a wide variety of ideas. Take a look at the example in figure 2.

In addition, this project is an excellent way to practice and improve your watercolor skills. Although it's very simple and does not take much time, it involves almost all the main techniques and principles of watercolor painting. Be creative and do not be afraid to experiment!

Cute Cupcake



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1 or 2; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape (optional)

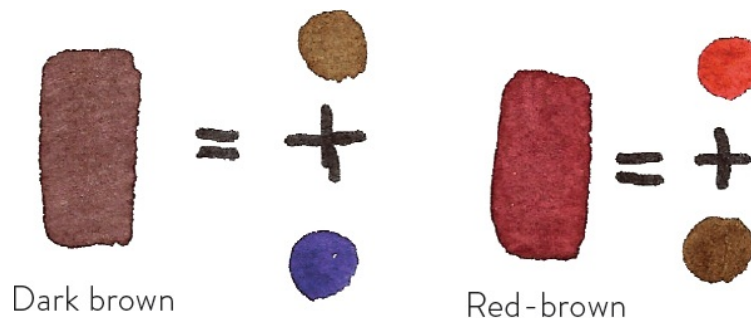
Is it possible to paint a cupcake in just 15 minutes with watercolors? My answer is yes. Of course, a simple illustration is far from realistic, but it will certainly be yummy and beautiful in its own way. In this project, I will explain the principles and steps that will allow you to paint any cupcake.

Cupcakes are a very good subject for learning how to paint with watercolors. First of all, each of their components has a different texture, giving you the opportunity to practice creating one characteristic surface after another. Second, the finished work will always look nice and cute—and I think being satisfied with your work is very important for staying motivated. So, let's learn how to quickly paint a delicious cupcake.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



Before you begin filling up the paper with beautiful watercolor paint, make a sketch with a pencil, referring to figure 1. It's enough to put down just several basic lines. I don't advise drawing the details, especially in the frosting area, since it would need to be done very softly.



Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Let's begin our project by creating the foundation for the frosting. Moisten the area designated for the frosting with clean water. Without waiting for it to dry, apply purple in a watery consistency with a medium brush (size 4 or 5). To do this, touch the brush to the wet surface several times, and, if necessary, blend the paint at the edges to make them look neat (read more about painting on wet [here](#)).

Now fill the base of the cupcake (the part covered by the paper liner) with a watery ochre. I recommend you use a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4).

Without waiting for the painted layer to dry, begin the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

Paint vertical stripes in a medium-consistency brown over the still-wet base layer (see the example for step 2). Use a small brush (size 1 or 2), and paint the lines from top to bottom. This way if the paint pools, it will happen at the bottom of the cupcake and not damage the overall look of the work.

Allow the painted layers to dry.

Take a medium-thick dark brown and fill the middle area of the cupcake, between the paper liner and the frosting. Use a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4).

Let the painting dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

In this step, we will use the layering effect (read more about layering [here](#)). Take a medium brush (size 4 or 5) and paint a cherry with crimson on top of the frosting layer. The paint should be quite thick.

Leaving the cherry layer to dry, move on to creating shadows on the frosting.

Take a detail brush and paint a few purple curves, as shown in the image of step 3.

To make the shadow look softer, use the softening technique: take a small round brush (size 1 or 2) and blur the painted lines with water. (Read more about softening [here](#).)

Let the painting dry completely.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

The work is almost finished. We just need to add some details with medium-consistency paint and a detail brush. We'll use the layering technique throughout this step.

To start, paint a brown cherry stem, as shown in the image of step 4. Try to make the line as thin as possible, then thicken it.

Now, using red-brown, add a shadow to the cherry.

Wait for the painted layer to dry.

Add a shadow cast by the cherry to the frosting layer with purple. Use the softening technique again.

Paint a shadow on the cake area with dark brown, and paint the details on the paper liner with brown.

Our work is done.

For me, painting a cupcake is pure pleasure. I hope this project has also filled your heart with positivity.

What can you change when you paint other illustrations based on this lesson? I recommend experimenting with the color of the frosting as well as trying different decorative fruits or berries in place of the cherry.

Take a look at the examples in figure 2. Both of these cupcakes were painted using the step-by-step instructions in this lesson. Though they both have the same base, they look completely different. One is a blueberry cupcake, while the second is a strawberry cupcake. Design your own unique cupcake flavors and enjoy the process of painting them.

Layer Cake



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil

- Masking tape

Painted pastries and desserts are sadly the only ones without calories. But they're excellent subjects for painting, and watercolors are a perfect medium for them. It allows you to make beautiful transitions and effects, yet still gives bright and saturated colors.

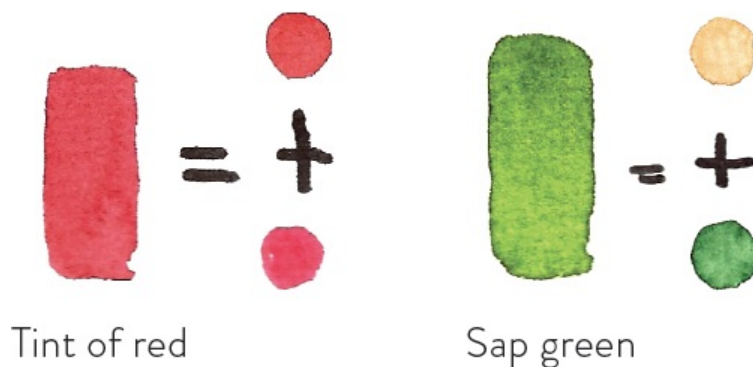
So, let's paint a beautiful and elegant dessert: a two-layer cake decorated with flowers. This illustrated cake is a perfect decoration for celebrating a birthday, wedding or any other important event. With its several tiers, it looks very elegant, and its shapes, colors and style project an air of grace.

Step-by-step, I will explain how to paint this cake very quickly, in only 15 minutes. I also hope that you'll be able to create your own unique cake paintings using what you learn in this lesson. So let's get down to business!

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



NOTE: You can use any green you have if you don't have ultramarine green.

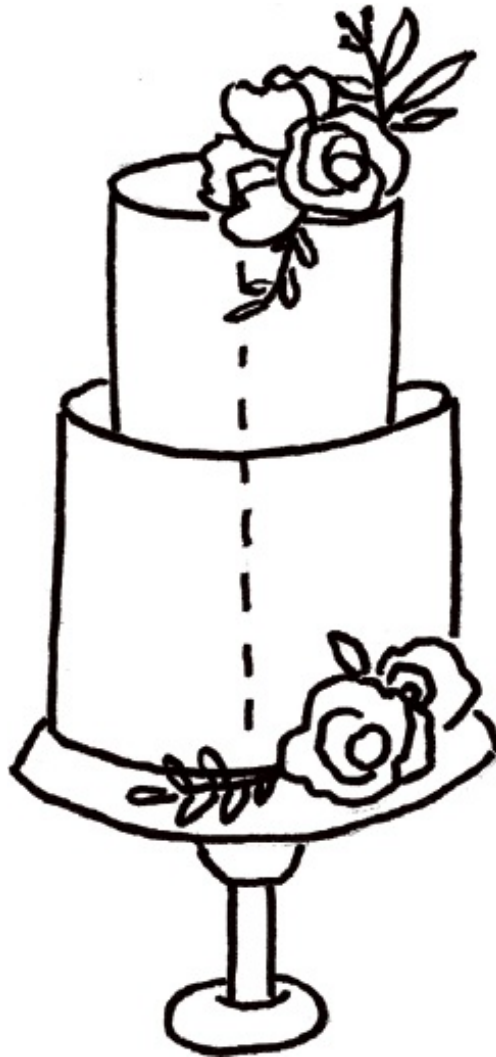
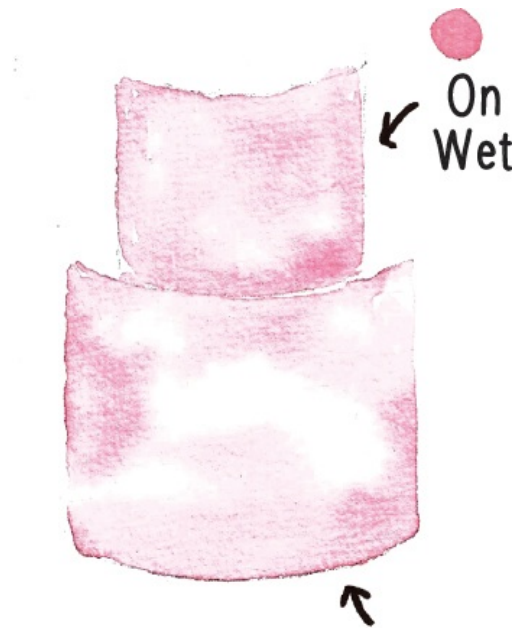


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Secure the watercolor paper with masking tape to your table or board. Make a light sketch with a pencil following the outlines in figure 1.

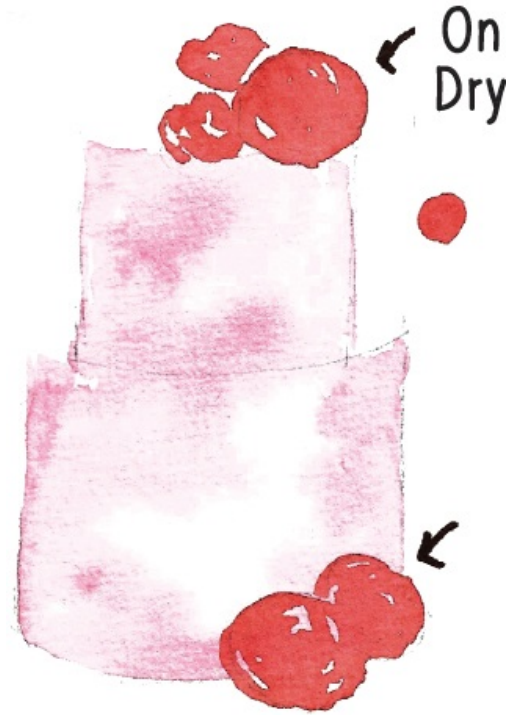
TIP: I suggest that instead of drawing highly intricate flowers, you sketch a circle for each of the flowers. This will be enough for painting the flower shapes.

Wash the two cake layers with clean water. Add a very watery magenta to the wet paper with a round brush that is not too large (size 3 or 4).

I wouldn't brush the wet layer much. Just carefully touch the brush to the wet paper a few times and the paint will spread over the paper by itself. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Allow the layer to dry.

STEP 2



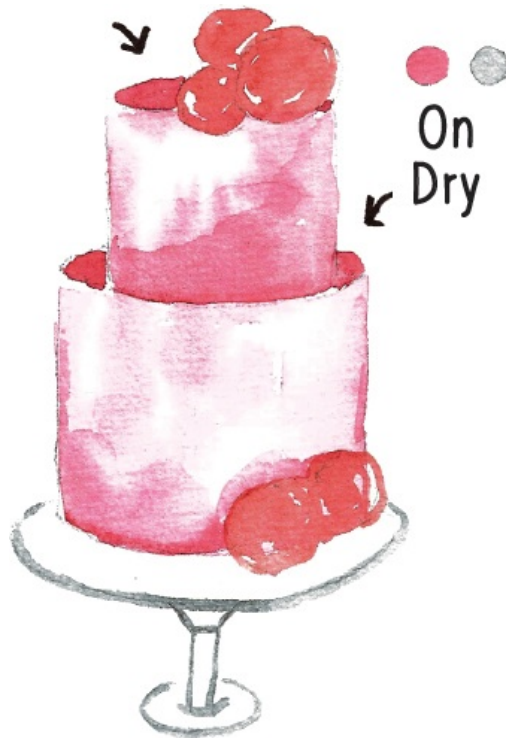
Step 2

Using the same brush, paint red flowers at the base and top of the cake. The paint should be in a medium consistency.

Note that in some places the flowers cover the layer painted in the first step. This is the layering technique in action (read more about layering [here](#)).

Allow the paint to dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to add a cake stand. This is a very important step because the stand adds an air of sophistication and elegance to the painting.

Using a brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2), paint a cake stand with very watery black paint as shown in the image of **step 3**.

Now we can add some depth to our work. To do this, paint the inside corners of the cake layers with a medium-consistency magenta.

Let the painting dry.

The final touch of this step is adding a shadow to each of the layers of the cake to make them look more realistic. Apply magenta to the bottom of each cake layer with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5). The consistency of the paint should, again, be medium. To make the shadows look softer, use the softening technique: first paint a line, then blur it with a clean and wet brush. (Read more about softening [here](#).)

Let the work dry completely.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Our festive cake is almost done. All that's left is adding the finishing touches with a detail brush and medium-consistency paint.

Using the tint of red, add a layer to the cake's flowers, as shown in the example. Wait for the layer to dry.

Now add leaves with ultramarine green and sap green. Again let the painted elements dry.

Now paint the flower heads with purple.

Last, use magenta to add texture to the surface of the frosting. You can make the texture with horizontal lines or a particular pattern. It all depends on whatever unique design you choose for your cake.

Our painting is finished.

You can use the principles and steps of this lesson to paint a one- or three-layer cake or even a four-layer one. Here are three examples I created by following this lesson's steps (see figure 2). I used the same colors but slightly changed the design of the cake stand and the placement of the decorative flowers. Feel free to experiment and play with different color combinations, though I advise you use gentle and warm shades as your main colors.



ADORABLE

Animals

In this chapter, we'll paint cute animals with watercolors. If you think animals are difficult to paint and not for everyone, then I have to assure you that it all depends on which ones you paint and how realistic you want them to be. If you want just a quick watercolor illustration, then they really are simple, as long as you choose animals that are easy to paint.

I have come up with a bunch of excellent and lovely projects for you. Each of them is simple to do and will take no more than 15 minutes of your time. You will not need to wrestle with how to paint this or that animal or spend hours on details. Practicing the projects in this chapter will allow you to learn how to apply watercolor techniques correctly, combine natural shades and create various textures.

Tropical Fish



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape

Let's paint a bright tropical fish!

There is one feature that unites almost all tropical fish—their diverse and bright coloring. To simplify this painting, I have chosen one color for the base color: yellow. It is the color of the sun, joy and fun. I am sure that this lesson will bring you a surge of happiness. Fish are a great subject for watercolor painting, and this project is ideal for creative activities with children. So, prepare your brushes and paints and let's

begin!

PROJECT COLORS



Yellow



Tint of
blue-green



Blue

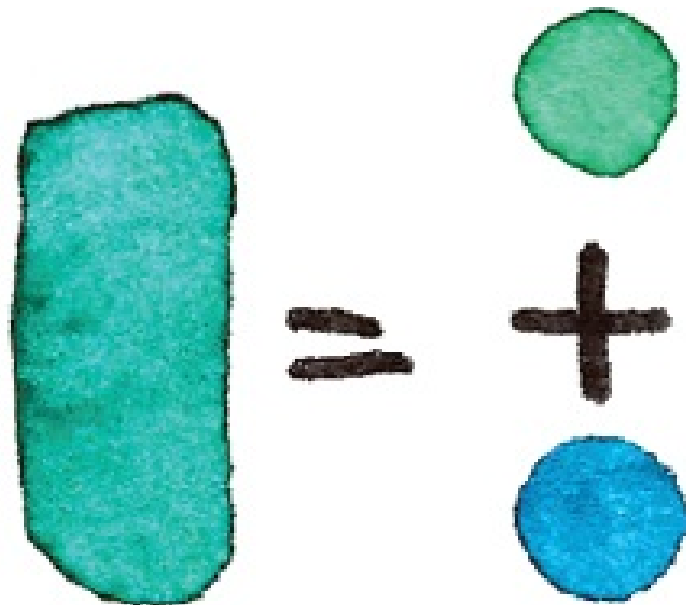


Sienna
or brown



Black

COLOR MIXING



Tint of
blue-green

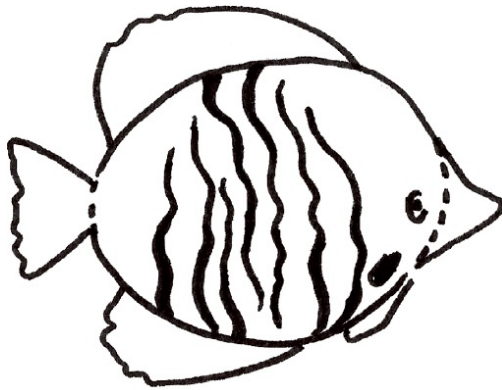


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Since this project is very simple, in my opinion you do not need a preliminary sketch. But if you feel that a pencil sketch gives you more confidence, then make a light one consisting of just the baselines (see figure 1).

After the sketch is done, secure the paper to your table or board with masking tape.

Paint the base of the fish with yellow in a medium-to-thin consistency. The right consistency all depends on how bright your yellow pigment is. Add enough water to give the color a medium saturation. Use a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4 or 5).

Let the paint dry.

NOTE: The shape of the fish is almost an oval except for its elongated front.

STEP 2

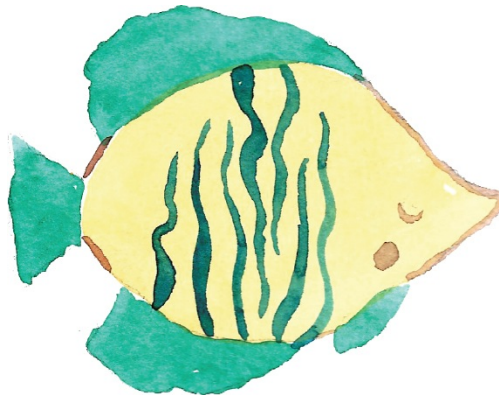


Step 2

Prepare the tint of blue-green in a medium consistency, and with a round brush (size 1–3), paint the fins and tail of the fish.

Allow the painted layer to dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Prepare blue and sienna in a medium consistency. Equip yourself with a detail brush, and paint wavy stripes in blue, as shown in the example. Now use sienna to add a shadow under the fish's eye (we will paint the eye in the next step) as well as along the fish's front, but not along the fin and tail areas. (Read more about layering [here](#)).

Allow the painting to dry.

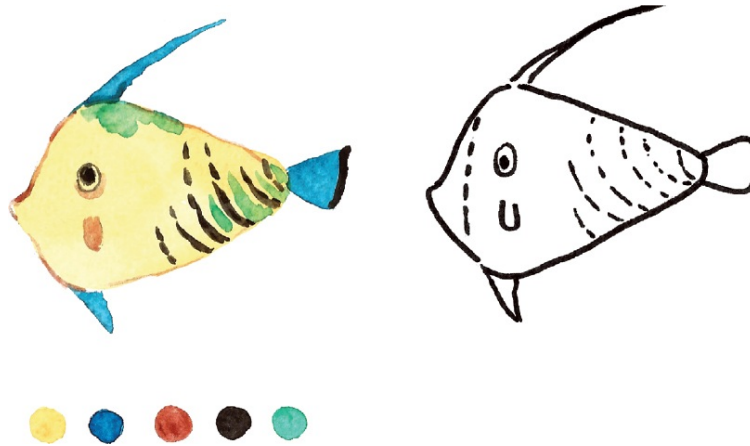


Figure 2

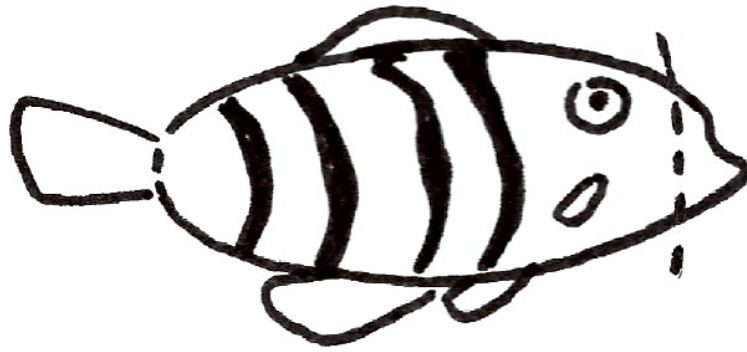


Figure 3

STEP 4



Step 4

It's already time to add the finishing touches. With a detail brush, paint the fish's eye black as well as the details on the fin and tail. The consistency of the paint should be medium.

That's it. Let the painting completely dry.

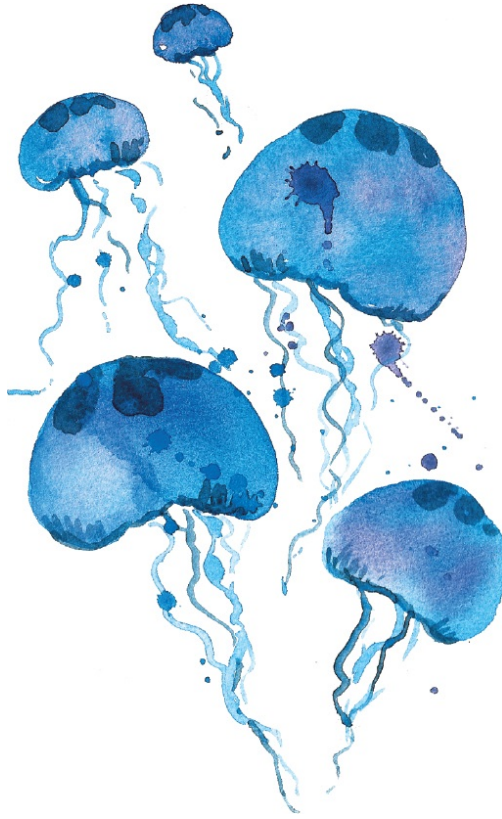
Now our project is finished, and I'm sure you didn't spend more than 10 minutes on it. Remember that the principles and steps of this lesson will work for different fish shapes—triangular, round and even square (though if a shape has angles, they should be smoothed for the base layer). The shape of the fins and tail can also be changed in many ways. Feel free to experiment and find the design you like best.

As for the colors for this project, I advise that you leave yellow as the base and change the other colors as you like. Look at figure 2 and figure 3 for some example variations of this project.

TIP: If the base color is yellow, then sienna is a great contrast.

Honestly, I think this is one of the easiest lessons in this book, and I hope you will like it as much as I do.

Jellyfish Pattern



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4; large 7 or 8
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

In this project, I will show you how to paint jellyfish with watercolors. This lesson is probably the easiest in the book—you can even do it with

children. Despite its simplicity, though, the final work will always look very impressive and cute. Prepare your brushes and watercolors, and let's begin!

PROJECT COLORS



Cobalt blue
(or ultramarine)

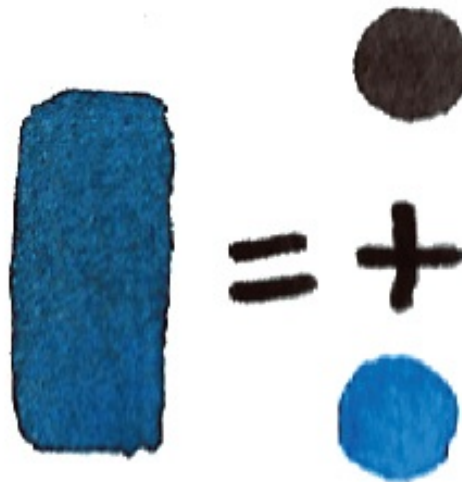


Purple



Dark blue

COLOR MIXING

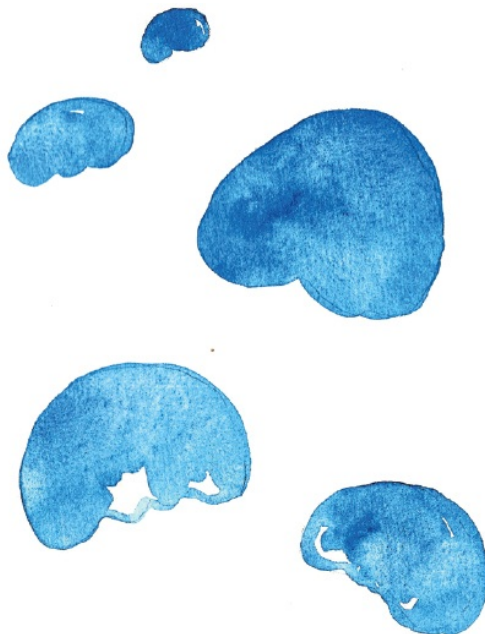


Dark blue



Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

It is very important to secure the paper to your table or board for this project, which you can do with masking tape. Now draw a light sketch with a pencil following figure 1. Remember that it is not necessary to show all the details and lines in a preliminary sketch; it is enough to draw only the baselines.

After the sketch is ready, paint the shapes of the jellyfish with cobalt blue. The paint should not be thick—a watery or medium consistency is ideal for the base layer. Use round brushes of different sizes. I recommend a size 7 or 8 brush for the bigger jellyfish, a size 3 or 4 for the medium ones, and a size 1 or 2 for the smallest.

Do not wait for the layer to dry. Go straight to step 2.



Figure 2

STEP 2



Step 2

Add a few drops of medium-consistency purple to each jellyfish shape. Since the previous layer is still wet, the paint will spread itself over the paper and create a beautiful blending effect (read more about blending [here](#)). Use a small round brush (size 2 or 3).

Now let the painting dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to turn these bright spots into the jellyfish. To do this, let's add tentacles to the painting.

Prepare cobalt blue in a medium consistency and, using a detail brush, paint tentacles for each of the jellyfish, as in the example. If you want to paint your own version of the tentacles, start with a light pencil sketch before moving on to the watercolors.

Try to make the tentacles thin and elegant. I advise you paint broken lines and then connect them. It is better to make the lines thinner this way, then complete them if you need to.

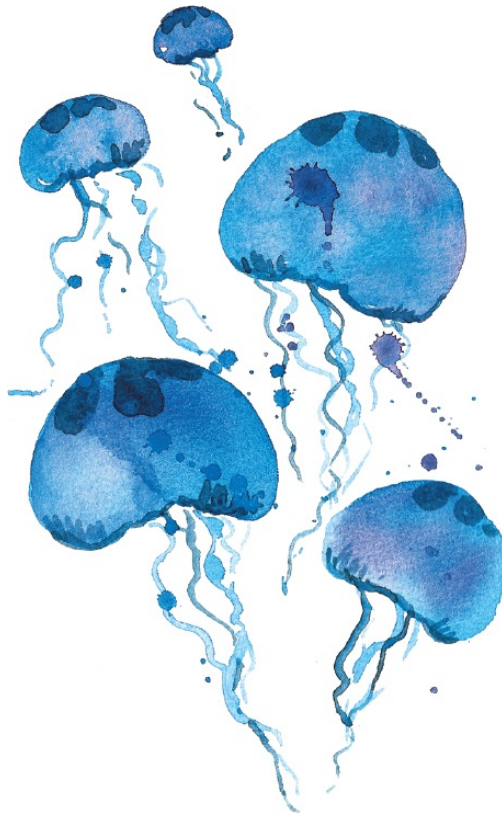
Note that each of the jellyfish has complex and compacted tentacles. The steps in figure 2 show how I paint them, but to be honest, you can paint them as you like. The most important thing is for the tentacles to look wavy and elegant.

Allow the painted layer to dry completely.



Figure 3

STEP 4



Step 4

It's time to add details. With a medium-consistency dark blue and a detail brush, paint the shadows and pattern on each of the jellyfish. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

After that, add a few extra tentacles with the same color. They will make a beautiful contrast to the cobalt blue tentacles.

As for the decorative pattern on the jellyfish, you can paint any kind of pattern. It is not necessary to repeat the one shown in the example. Look for photo references and see what patterns real jellyfish have. Remember that nature is our best teacher.

The final touch in this lesson is adding splatters. In my opinion, a few splatters of cobalt blue and purple give the work airiness.

Once you've finished your splatters, let the painting dry completely.

I don't know about you, but I like to create simple patterns like the one on this jellyfish—it's very fun. It also teaches balance: on the one hand, we must allow our creative side to take over, yet on the other hand, the painting needs to be well composed and the jellyfish recognizable.

I encourage you to create many different patterns using the steps in this lesson. You can change the colors as well as experiment with the composition, placement and the jellyfish's size (see the example in figure 3). Sounds great, doesn't it? Everyone can paint, and this project is good proof.

Garden Bird



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

When I was a child, bird watching was one of my favorite hobbies. It was a real miracle, and to this day, I still love to watch birds. I also love listening to them. There is nothing more beautiful than a bird's song in the morning, is there? I like birds' variety too: all the bright plumage colors and combinations inspire me so much. They make any painting of a bird very beautiful and quite impressive.

In this project, I show you how to paint a cute, colorful little bird with watercolors. This medium is excellent for creating beautiful patterns of plumage and is also easy to work with. How fast and easy is it to paint a cute bird? Let's look at it step-by-step.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

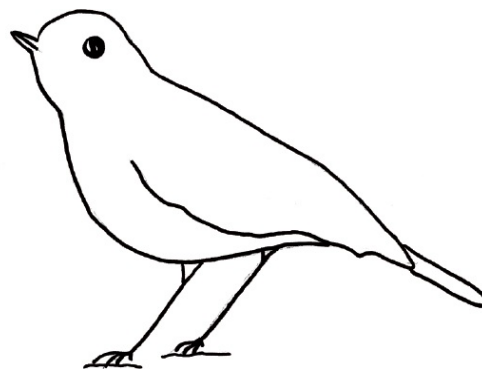


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Let's begin the work by making a very light pencil sketch following the drawing in figure 1.

As you can see, I don't do a detailed sketch. In my opinion, it is enough to show the baselines, then add detail with watercolors as I work through the project.

After you finish sketching, secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board. Now you're ready to begin painting.

Take a medium round brush (size 4 or 5) and moisten the base of the bird shape with clean water.

Please note that you shouldn't work on the bird's eye, wing or tail areas yet.

Add medium-consistency ochre and orange to the still-damp base of the bird (read more about painting on wet [here](#)).

NOTE: To make the piece look neat, you should be creating very structured and even edges. So change to a wet and clean size 2 or 3 brush for the base's outline.

Let the painted layer dry completely.

STEP 2



Step 2

Arm yourself with a small round brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2).

Paint the bird's eye dark blue, leaving a small area inside it unpainted for the highlight (read more about reserving [here](#)). Use medium-consistency paint.

Now we turn to work on the bird's wing and tail. Take a medium round brush (size 4 or 5) and wet their areas with clean water. Without waiting for the layer to dry, add cobalt blue with a few touches of the brush. I like to also add a few spots of dark blue.

Let's make the transition between the bird's body and its wing look more natural. Add some cobalt-blue strokes to the orange-yellow base layer (read more about layering [here](#)).

Allow the work to dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Now we'll paint various elements that will make our watercolor silhouette look like a bird and add some shadows that will give the work more depth.

We'll use medium-consistency paint for all the colors. Now let's get started.

Paint the bird's beak and feet in brown, using a small round brush (size 1 or 2). With the same color and brush, add a shadow under the bird's wing and also at its head, as shown in the image of step 3. Now use orange to add another layer of shadow under the bird's eye and in the bird's chest area.

To make the layer of shadow lie lightly and gently on the bird, use the softening technique (read more about softening [here](#)).

I recommend you also add a dark blue layer of shadow to the wing as shown in the example. Just a few brush strokes are enough to create depth.

Now let the work dry completely.

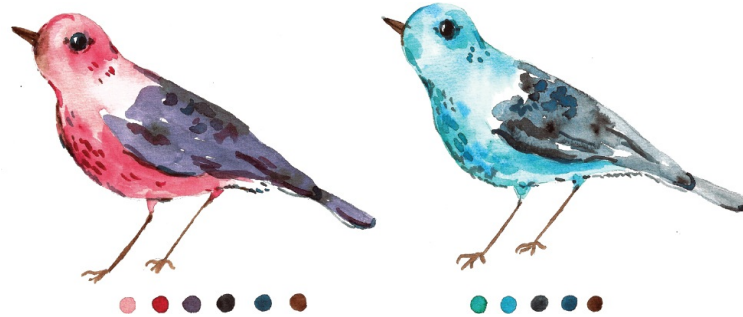


Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

It's time to add the details.

We'll use medium-consistency paint and a detail brush for this step.

First, add a few feather details to the plumage of our charming bird using orange, dark brown and black. Also add another layer to the eye with black, which will make the bird look more lively.

The final touch is refining the bird's beak and feet with dark brown.

Our adorable bird is finished.

Notice how the details don't cover all of the plumage and are placed randomly. The human eye loves contrast, so it is important to create

both areas with and without details so that the eye keeps moving around and exploring the image.

Following the principles and steps of this lesson, you can paint many different birds using watercolors. Figure 2 shows two examples of differently colored birds created with this lesson's instructions. Although I painted them in the same way, each bird looks special and unique.

While practicing with this project, experiment not only with colors but also with shapes and details to create your own unique bird illustrations. Look for inspiration in nature and enjoy the process of creation.

Cute and Colorful Birds



SUPPLIES

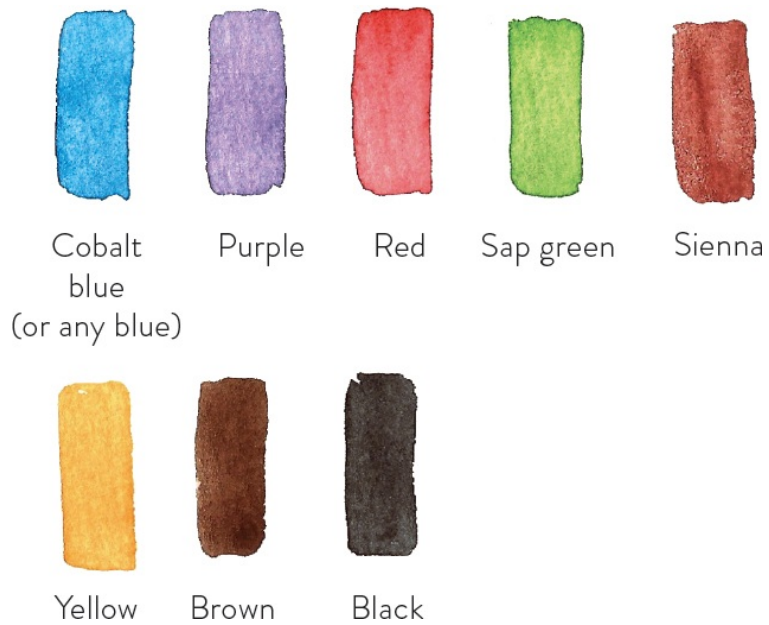
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- White gouache or gel pen

In this lesson we'll learn how to easily paint a colorful and cheerful bird within 15 minutes. This project can be just a fun doodle or a quick warm-up exercise before a longer painting session. In addition, it is an excellent project for expanding your imagination. Try painting these colorful birds with your children or friends. I am sure that everyone will

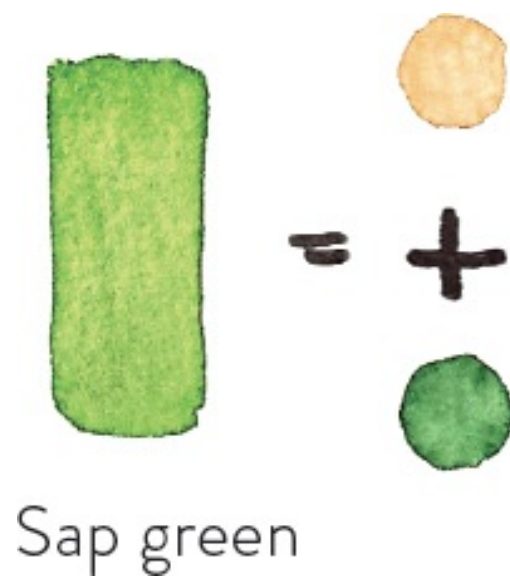
get joy from painting this fun pattern.

Let's get ready to paint.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



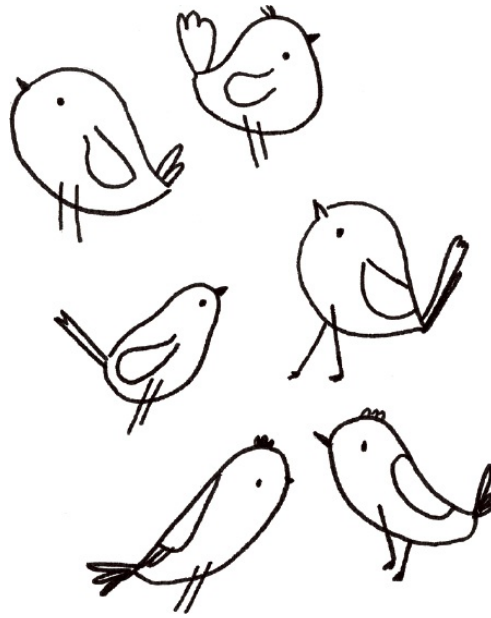


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Before you begin painting, take a look at figure 1, which shows the outlines of the birds we will paint. Follow it to make a pencil sketch on your watercolor paper. Even though a sketch isn't absolutely necessary for this project, I advise you make one in order to feel more confident

when you start painting. When you're done sketching, secure the paper to your work surface with masking tape.

Take a round brush (size 4 or 5) and wash the shape of one of the birds with water. Now add one of the base colors—cobalt blue, purple, red, sap green, sienna or yellow—to the still-wet layer. The paint should be watery so that it won't be difficult to add details later with the same color. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Now repeat the process for all the other bird shapes with the remaining base colors.

Let the painting dry completely.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now that we've prepared the base for our work, we'll start gradually turning it into a real masterpiece. In this step, we'll paint on dry.

Arm yourself with a detail brush and use a medium-thick brown to paint the beak and legs of each bird. You can follow the example or allow your creativity to flourish by adding shapes and elements of a different form or style.

Let the painted layer dry.

TIP: To create your own uniquely styled beaks, legs and other elements, refer to real birds. Use photos of the feathered beauties and try to analyze and highlight the simple forms that make up a species. Then make sketches of the selected shapes on either sketching paper or office paper. Use these figures for your watercolor illustration.

STEP 3



Step 3

Add more details with a detail brush and medium-thick black paint. Add an eye to each bird by making a dot. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Pick up a round brush with a thin tip (size 2 or 3). Now paint the wings and tails of the birds with the base colors used in step 1. Use paint of a medium consistency.

Note that for each bird these details should be done in the same shade you used for the bird's base in step 1. That is, if a bird's base is red, its wings and tail should also be red. It is important to use medium-consistency paint at this stage so that the layer will be visible over the translucent base layer.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Our painting is almost done! Now you need to add a shadow to each bird. Apply the shadow in the same shade as the base color with medium-consistency paint using the softening technique (read more about softening [here](#)). Use a round brush with a thin tip (size 2).

Let the painting dry completely.

Now use a detail brush to add small details to each bird using medium-consistency paint that matches the bird's base color.

Also add a small reflection in each bird's eye using white gouache or a gel pen, unless the eye is too small. I don't recommend adding a reflection if it will look too big for the eye.

You can use any kind of simple shapes or spots for your decorative details. Use your imagination and be creative, or repeat the elements that I have painted. Allow the painting to dry.

Try changing the base colors and playing with shapes as well as the decorative details.

Figure 2 shows birds I painted using this lesson but whose colors and placement I changed. As you can see, this lesson is also a great way to practice solving compositional issues and trying different placements for birds. So, don't wait—start painting new fun and colorful birds!

Tabby Cat



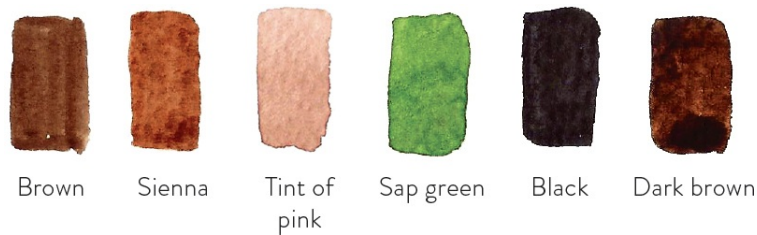
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Fan brush
- Pencil (optional)
- Masking tape (optional)

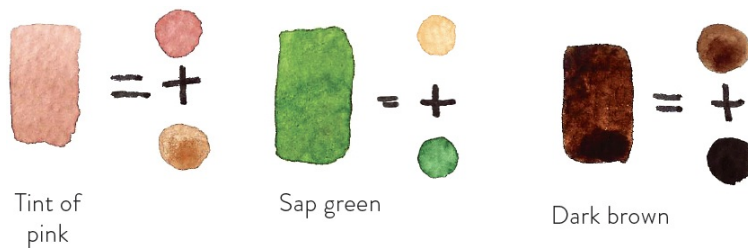
- White gouache

In this project, I will show you how to paint a portrait of a cat. In general, animals aren't the easiest subjects to paint, but if you follow my tips and instructions and practice a little, you'll be able to paint this one almost effortlessly.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



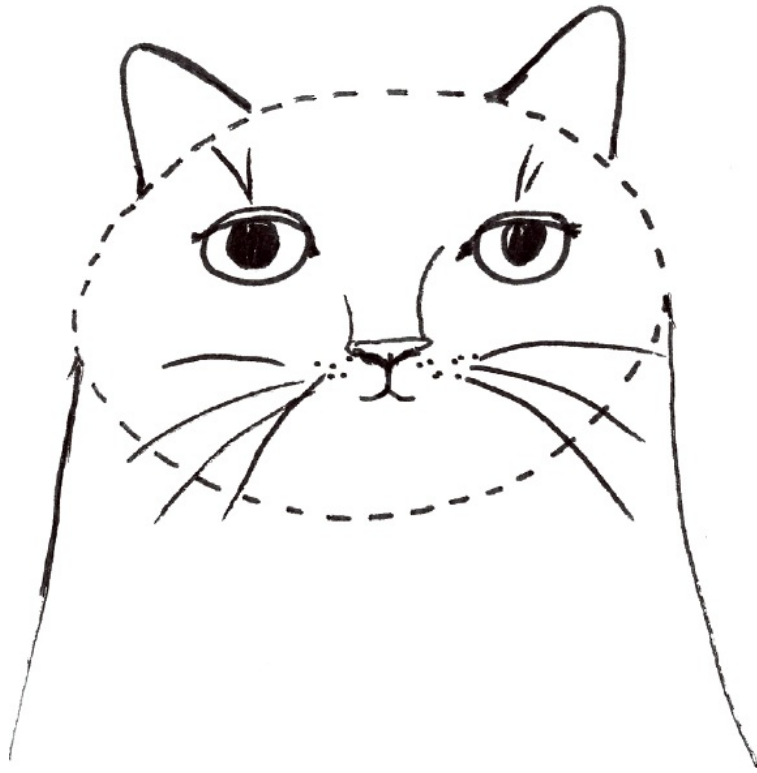


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

I usually don't make a preliminary pencil sketch for this project. Without one, the painting looks airy and pencil lines won't interfere with the watercolor layers. However, you can make one if it will help you paint with more confidence. Just remember not to push too hard on the paper with the pencil; it is enough to simply mark the main lines. In figure 1, you can see a sketched portrait of a cat. It is a fairly abstract sketch, but it's enough to paint a watercolor portrait and understand the principles of its construction.

First we will paint the cat's head and part of its body. Dampen the paper

with clean water, and without waiting for it to dry, paint the shape of the head and body with brown and sienna, as shown in the example. Use a medium brush (size 4–6) and make the brush strokes in one direction. The paint should be watery. If your cat will be fluffy, the shape of its head will merge smoothly with its body. If you want to paint a short-haired cat, then you can make a clearer separation between the forms. Note that the painted shape doesn't need to be perfect or have smooth edges. (Read more about the on-wet technique [here](#).)

Without waiting for the painted layer to dry, continue with the next step.

TIP: If there is too much water on the painting, touch the extra water with a clean and dry brush. It will absorb the excess. Don't press the brush hard, though, or it may leave a mark. A light and neat touch is enough.

STEP 2



Step 2

On the still-wet layer, add strokes of brown, as shown in the example. These will emphasize the color of the cat's fur. (Read more about blending [here](#).) Use medium-consistency paint and a size 2 or 3 brush with a thin tip. (Read more about brush strokes [here](#).)

Allow the painting to dry.

It's time to add the cat's ears. Painting on the dry layer, mark their shape with medium-consistency sienna. Once again, they don't need to be perfect. Next, inside the ears, paint a layer with a medium-consistency tint of pink. Use a small brush for this purpose (size 1 or 2).

Let the painting dry.

As you can see, the shapes are gradually becoming recognizable even as we keep the work easy. Let's go on to the next step.

STEP 3



Step 3

Now we will paint details on the dry layer (read more about layering [here](#)). Use medium-consistency paint for all of these details as well as a size 1 or 2 brush with a thin tip or a detail brush if that size is too big.

Paint a base for the eyes with sap green. Let the layer dry, then add the pupils with black.

After that, we move on to the nose and whiskers. Add the cat's nose with brown and the tint of pink. Paint the whiskers dark brown.

To make the cat look more natural and give it more depth, paint another layer of fur around the ears and a clearer layer over the fur you painted in step 2. Try not to overdo it with the details, especially on the fur, so that they don't drown out the beautiful watercolor base.

The last part of this step is adding shadows to the nose and inner edges of the eyes with brown. I recommend you use the softening technique for this (for more about softening, see [here](#)).

Let the painted layers dry completely.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Our painting is becoming more and more recognizable. We just need to add the final details with the layering technique. Use a detail brush or a small brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2) to paint patches of reflected light on the cat's eyes with white gouache, as shown in the example.

TIP: If the gouache layer is invisible after it dries, add another layer on top.

With black, paint the cat's eyelids as well as a shadow at its nose and another at its mouth. The paint should be medium-thick and close to saturated.

Now add small clarifying accents to the cat's ears and the fur with dark brown and brown. This time, the paint should be medium consistency.

To make the cat's fur look even more natural, I will share an interesting technique with you. Take a dry fan brush, lower it onto the brown and dark brown paint, and swipe it from the center toward the outer edge. Go beyond the limits of the painted base layer in some areas to create a feeling of airiness (read more about brush strokes [here](#)).

Our portrait is finished. Allow the painting to dry completely.

Although this is a very painterly portrait of a cat, the result is impressive and cute. Using this lesson's steps and techniques, you can paint a variety of portraits of cats. One example is figure 2. Experiment with different color combinations and head, ear and eye shapes.

I also recommend you use references for your experiments. Since your portrait should be recognizable as a cat, a picture of a real cat will help you achieve more realism. If you have a cat at home, you can also take a picture of them and use the photo as a reference.

I hope you enjoyed this project and that it will inspire you to paint other animals.

Black Bear



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4–6
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

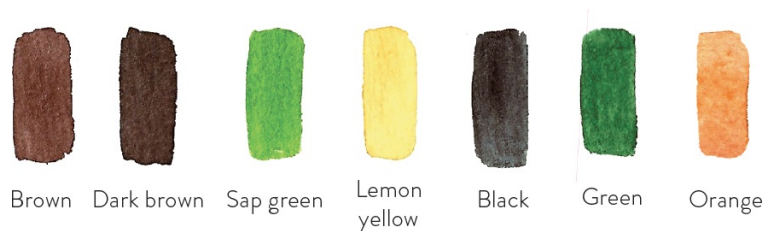
Bears are formidable and strong animals, but in this project we will make one that looks very cute. After all, no matter what materials or

methods we use, we have the artistic license to highlight certain characteristics of a subject, including bears.

I love to paint kind and cute bears. It's also a nice challenge to combine their formidability with how affectionate they can look. A bear with a bouquet of flowers, on a bicycle, with a gift or a pot of honey—these are all great ideas for greeting cards or children's illustrations.

In this lesson, you will learn step-by-step how to paint a cute watercolor bear sitting in a flowering meadow. All in 15 minutes. Let's start.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

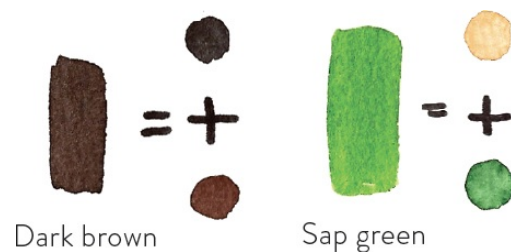




Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Before you start working with the paints and delve into the world of colors, pay attention to figure 1, which shows an outline sketch of our illustration. Note that the lower part of the bear is not sketched in great detail but rather covered with a layer of grass.

So, since our watercolors will take the main role later, make a very light pencil sketch following the figure. Then secure the watercolor paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Now we'll get to work with our watercolors. Take a medium round brush (size 4–6), and wash the area inside your sketch of the bear's shape with clean water. Then add brown to the still-wet surface of the paper. The consistency of paint should be medium.

I advise you add the paint at the edges of the shape, then lightly spread it around inside if necessary or allow it to spread itself over the wet surface of the paper (read more about painting on wet [here](#)).

Don't wait for the layer to dry. Go to the next step immediately.

NOTE: The bear's base color should not be uniform, but rather saturated at the edges and fairly transparent at the center.

STEP 2



Step 2

Change to a smaller brush (size 2 or 3), and add dark brown in a

medium consistency to the still-wet base layer at the bear's ears and front paws, beneath its head and in several places along the edge of its shape. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

Allow the work to completely dry.

Using a round brush (size 1 or 2), paint a base for the flowering meadow with a watery sap green. Use the same brush to add flowers in a medium-consistency lemon-yellow, as shown in the example. Mix lemon yellow with the sap green to create a very beautiful watercolor effect and a base for the meadow. We've again used the blending technique.

Let the painting dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

To give the bear more depth, add a layer of shadows using dark brown and black. Use medium-consistency paint and a medium brush with a thin tip (size 4–6).

Let the layer dry completely.

Now take a detail brush and paint in medium-consistency dark brown

and brown some defining elements, like the bear's inner ears, the details of its fur and the shapes of its hands and feet. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Let the painting dry.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

It's time to add details. Use a detail brush or small brush with a thin tip (size 2 or 3) and medium-consistency paint throughout this step.

Paint a black nose, mouth and eyes on the bear. Take your time: these are the most important finishing touches and will set the general mood of the work.

Now add small details with dark brown, green and orange. Add flowers, grass and some of the fur. The main thing is not to overdo the details. Less is more here.

Let the painting dry completely.

By practicing this lesson, you will not only learn how to create beautiful and cute illustrations but also enjoy the process. Look at figure 2. It is very similar to the work in this project, isn't it? I slightly changed the colors of the blooming meadow and added a sky background at the end. Giving the bear a different muzzle also changed its expression.

I suggest you experiment while practicing this lesson. By changing the background and expression of the bear's face as well as adding your own details, you'll easily create cute illustrations of your own.

Bunny



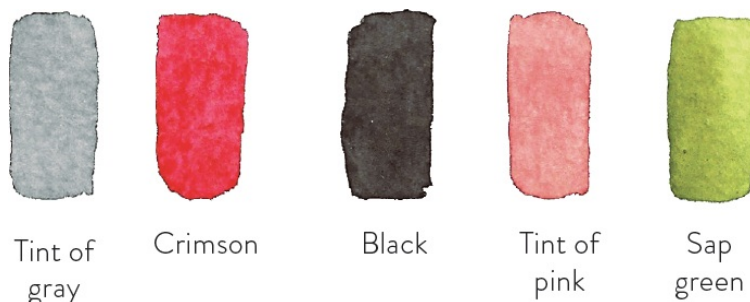
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush

- Pencil
- Masking tape (optional)

Although I love painting all animals, bunnies are by far my favorite. They are extremely cute and very funny little animals. I paint these guys in different styles, colors and compositions. I want to share with you one of the ways I often like to paint them. I believe this method is the easiest—even a child can master it. So, let's get started!

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

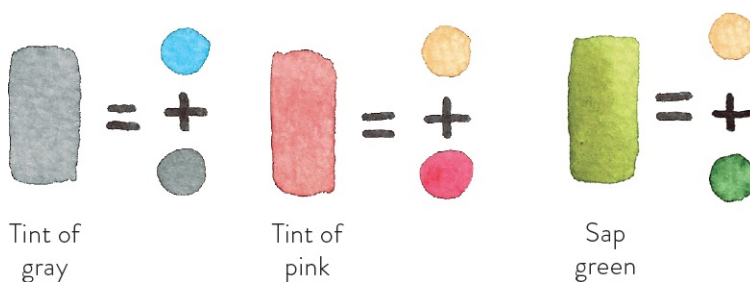
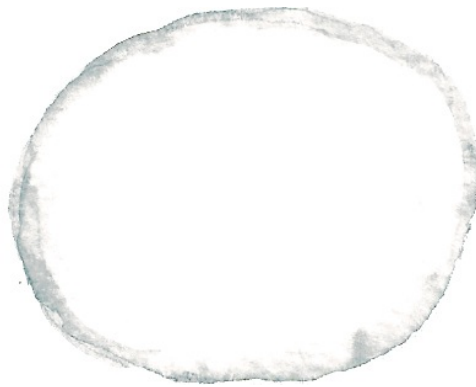




Figure 1

STEP 1



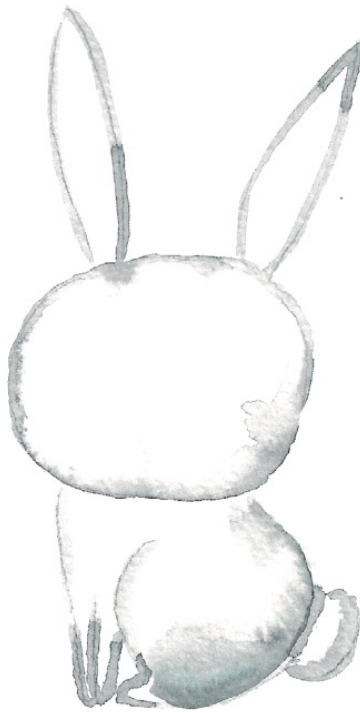
Step 1

Start by making a light pencil sketch on watercolor paper (see figure 1). If you like, secure the paper to your table or board with masking tape when you're done.

Paint the outline of the bunny's head with the gray tint. Use a round brush with a thin tip (size 3–5). After that, without pausing, clean your brush and use it to blur the paint from the inside of the circle (for more on softening, see [here](#)).

You've made an excellent start and are ready to move on to the next stage!

STEP 2



Step 2

We'll continue working with the same brush and tint of gray. Paint the bunny's ears, torso, legs and tail. Without waiting for the layer to dry, clean your brush and use it to blur the paint inside the torso and tail outward.

Allow the painting to completely dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Our painting is already beginning to look like a bunny, and now we're ready to use finer details to really show what we're creating.

Prepare crimson, black and the tint of pink in a medium consistency. With a small thin-tipped brush (size 2 or 3), use crimson to paint a scarf and the tint of pink to paint the inside of the bunny's ears, as shown in the example. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Now use the detail brush and paint small strokes in black to emphasize that the bunny has a beautiful coat.

Let the painting completely dry.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Now use the detail brush and again use all the paints in a medium

consistency.

Paint the bunny's eyes, nose and mouth black and tinge its eyebrows with the tint of gray. I would also add the tint of pink. It's not required, but I think it gives the painting an extra something special.

The final touch is the decorative elements. Paint the details according to the example with the tint of pink and sap green, or use your imagination and paint any unique elements that you like. The main thing is to know when to stop: don't overcrowd the painting with too many details.

Let the painting completely dry.

This project is a great opportunity to show your illustrative abilities as well as your watercolor skills. The details and colors you choose will all give your painting different moods, meaning that you can really create a fun and unique character image. Figure 2 shows one example.

In my opinion, the hat makes this bunny funnier than the one we painted in this project. The stars and scarf together also give the painting a mood similar to that of ***The Little Prince***, don't they? This lesson is proof that the details matter. So give your imagination free rein to create cute, kind and unique illustrations.

Sly Fox



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4
- Detail brush
- Pencil

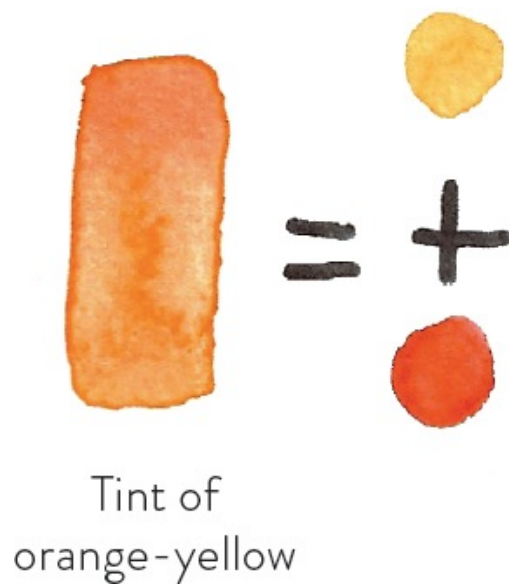
Foxes are very beautiful animals and a popular subject for painting, both with watercolors and with other media. I've seen this animal several times in London, even right in the city center! I can't convey their beauty with words, but watercolors can help me capture some of it.

In this lesson, you will learn one very illustrative way of depicting a fox. Step-by-step, we'll see how easy it is to paint a fox using a limited color palette. Let's start!

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



NOTE: Read the instructions carefully before beginning work.

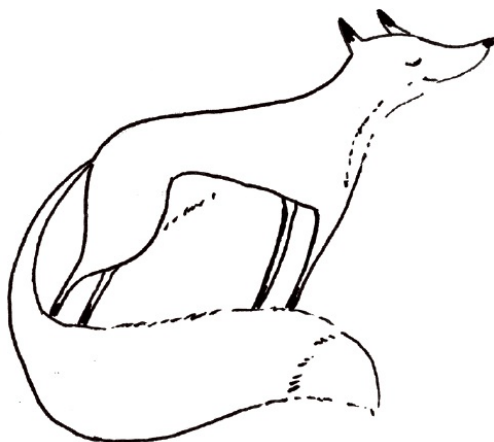


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Start by making a light pencil sketch on watercolor paper (see figure 1). Pay special attention to the fox's tail and make its outline as faint as possible.

Now moisten the tail area with water and add the orange-yellow tint and orange to the wet layer. The consistency of both paints should be medium, and you should use a thin-tipped round brush (size 1–4) with neat, gentle touches.

TIP: Dampen the area beyond the tail when washing the paper with water, but apply the paint only within the tail area.

The paint will spread through and outside of the tail area to create a beautiful fluffiness. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Don't wait for the paint to dry, just move on to the next stage when you are ready.

STEP 2



Step 2

Following the lines of your preliminary sketch, paint over the rest of the fox's body on the dry paper with a medium-thick tint of orange-yellow. Use a small round brush with a thin tip (size 2–4).

On the still-wet layer, add a few strokes of medium-consistency orange with the same brush. (Read more about blending [here](#).)

After the freshly painted layer dries, go on to the next step.

STEP 3



Step 3

Equip yourself with a detail brush or a round brush with a thin tip (size

1 or 2). Now, using medium-consistency brown, paint a ragged line along the edge of the fox's fur, as shown in the example. This line will imitate the silhouette of a fox. With the same color, paint the fox's ears and paws as well as the tip of its nose. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Let the paint dry completely.



Figure 2



STEP 4



Step 4

Now we move on to the project's final stage: adding details. We will continue to paint with a detail brush and medium-consistency paints.

Paint the eye of the fox black and add a little black to its paws. Then, with a clean small round brush (size 3–4), blur the paws' paint. (Read more about softening [here](#).)

Now add a few strokes of orange and brown to the fox's fur.

The final touch is a few decorative purple flowers and plants. They're done in a very simple illustrative manner and add a little folk style to the work.

Let the painting dry completely.

We painted a charming fox—you could even say he's a character. Of course, coming up with new animal poses and painting them is not an easy task, so I encourage you to practice the lesson's basics many times, leaving the silhouette the same and slightly changing the placement and shape of the tail (see figure 2).

This way you can experiment with your fox while still creating beautiful and proportionally correct work.

Decorative elements can also be very diverse, in both form and color, so unleash your imagination and show your creativity.

Unicorn



- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

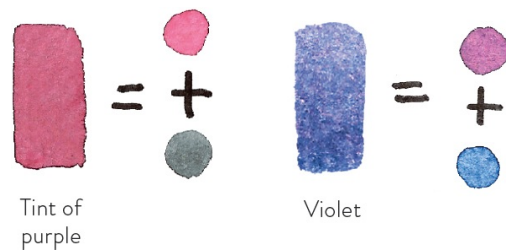
This lesson is extremely magical because we will be dabbling with watercolors to create a unicorn. Unicorns are a lovely subject for painting because they're mythical creatures, which make for excellent practice with watercolor painting. This project will really allow our creative juices to flow since we can design a mystical and elegant creature that will blow away anyone who sees it!

Everyone loves unicorns, and I especially love painting them. When I imagine this cutie, vast cottony clouds and sparkles of fairy dust float before my eyes. Our flight of fantasy can go anywhere in this project, and we can make our unicorn part of a fantastic story. So, let's take a step-by-step look at how to create this magic with your own hands.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

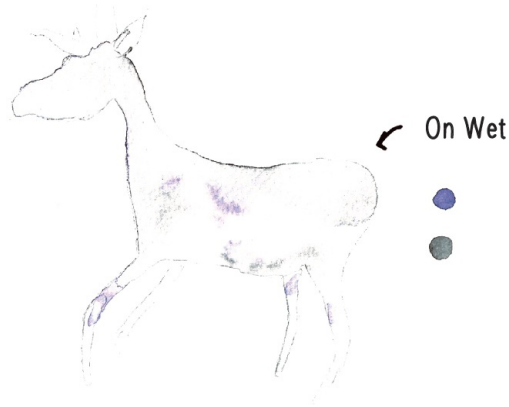


SUPPLIES



Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Let's start by creating a sketch. Following the rough outline in figure 1, sketch the unicorn with a pencil. I advise you don't draw the details and instead make a very simple and light sketch that includes only the main lines.

Now, secure the paper with masking tape to the surface of your table or board. Moisten the area inside the shape of the unicorn with clean water. Then add violet and black to the wet paper. The paints should be very watery: for the finished unicorn to look bright, it is important not to make the base too dark. It's better to make this first base layer light. Apply the paint carefully with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5). (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Now wait for the work to mostly dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

We'll use the layering technique for the rest of the project (read more about layering [here](#)).

Arm yourself with a small brush with a thin tip (size 2 or 3). Paint the unicorn's mane, forelock and tail with medium-consistency magenta. Now paint the horn with a very watery magenta.

Allow the painted elements to dry.

Paint the unicorn's hooves with a thick and rich black. Then use a very watery black to trace out the unicorn's figure. This outline will not only make the figure clearer but also smooth out the rough lines made in step 1.

TIP: The contour line doesn't have to be perfect. You can make it intermittent, for example, or change the line's thickness while painting. This will give a unique and charming look to your painting.

Allow the piece to dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

To make the unicorn more lifelike, add a layer of shadows with black following the example. You can use the softening technique for this purpose (read about softening [here](#)). The consistency of the paint should be medium and your brush a size 4 or 5 with a thin tip.

Let the layer dry completely.

NOTE: The pair of legs in the background are darkened to make it visually clearer which legs are nearer to the viewer and which are farther away.

Now take a detail brush and paint the unicorn's nostril and closed eye black.

Add the tint of purple in a medium consistency to the inside of the unicorn's ear.

Paint the contour of the horn as well as the unicorn's blush with medium-consistency magenta.

Let the painting dry.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

This step is optional, but if you have time, you can follow it to add more details to your unicorn.

Begin by preparing magenta, the tint of purple and ochre for your unique decorative elements in a medium consistency. Then equip yourself with a detail brush.

First define the mane, forelock and tail with a few curved lines of magenta using a detail brush. You can also paint several loose locks of hair outside of the main hair with magenta or the tint of purple.

And of course, don't forget to add details to the unicorn's horn with the tint of purple.

The final touch is adding a few decorative elements such as stars, fairy dust or hearts. Anything will work nicely. The main goal is not to paint too many elements and steal attention away from the beautiful unicorn itself.

Done! Now let the artwork dry completely.

This lesson will allow you to understand the principles behind designing similarly styled characters. Look at figure 2. This unicorn was made following this lesson, but I changed the shape of its hair slightly and used a few different colors. By playing with shapes and colors and possibly changing the base figure of the unicorn, you can create a truly unique fairy tale character.



Fashion

The projects in this chapter are bold and colorful, and I am sure they will appeal to those who love style and fashion. As I say throughout this book, everything that surrounds us can be a great source of inspiration. And not just nature, but also ordinary things, such as wardrobe items or interior decorations. Whatever you have in your handbag can be the subject of a fashion illustration, too, like cosmetics, a mirror or a hairbrush. Or you can paint clothes, shoes, accessories or a certain fashion look. Anything from your wardrobe or dressing table works nicely.

In this chapter, I will show you how to give a fashion illustration a certain look or style with the help of particular types of lines. I will also teach you how to make the work elegant by painting it with transparent layers. Practicing other techniques and tricks from this chapter will definitely help you study fashion illustration, and I'm pretty sure you will be happy with the results.

Though all of these watercolor fashion sketches will take just 15 minutes of your time, they will help you strengthen your watercolor skills and easily create new and unique paintings.

Kisses



SUPPLIES

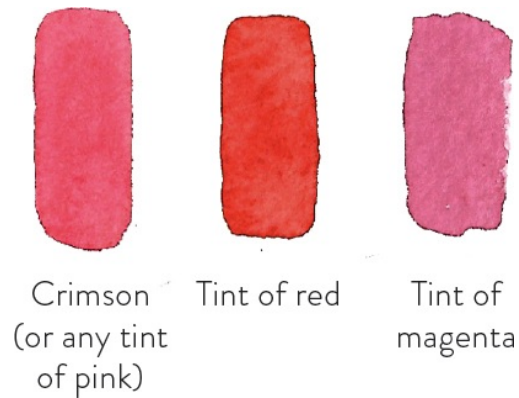
- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3
- Pencil

In this lesson you will learn how to paint a bright and colorful pattern—one of kisses. Or, more precisely, the traces of lipstick left by kisses. A very whimsical subject, isn't it? But that's expected with a fashion illustration.

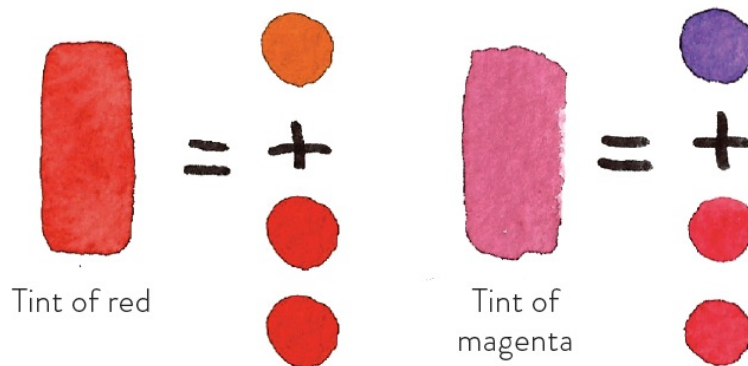
This pattern is very simple and easy for anyone to create. It's also very useful for those who want to practice creating paint consistencies and pigments or painting forms in a loose style. In addition, I believe that this project is a great warm-up for starting a more complex project.

Let's begin!

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



Painting freestyle is often better and more natural, so this project does not require a preliminary sketch. However, I still advise that you define your work area before beginning with pencil marks.

It's also important to know exactly what shape the lip imprint, or kiss, will have. Figure 1 shows two kinds of kisses, which are almost identical except for their size.

The most critical parts of the forms are the unpainted areas, which give human prints, like fingerprints or lip prints, their characteristic rough texture. Create these areas to show that your form is meant to be a kiss.

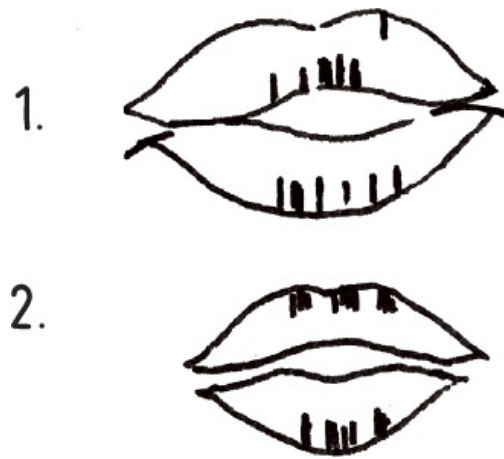
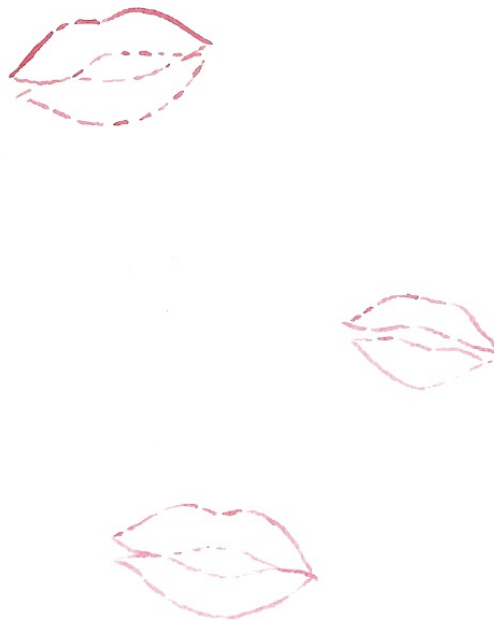


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Let's begin work inside our designated work area. In our case, this is a rectangle.

NOTE: In this project, all of the paints must be of a medium consistency.

Paint the broken lip contours with crimson, ideally with a small round

brush with a thin tip (size 1–3).

As I explained earlier, the unpainted gaps create the visual impression of prints and their shape makes it clear that these are lip prints. By painting a broken line like the one in the example, we leave room for these vacant areas.

Without waiting for the painted layer to dry, go on to the next step. However, do not worry if the layer has dried—it is not crucial for it to be wet in the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

Using the same brush, fill the lips with crimson, leaving the designated areas unpainted. It is important that these areas match up with the dashed contour line. A gap in the line (see figure 1) must correspond to an unpainted area inside the kiss. (Read more about reserving [here](#).)

Let the painting dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

Next prepare the tints of red and magenta. Repeat steps 1 and 2 with these colors and the same brush to make more kisses.

Remember that since this is a pattern, it is important for each kiss to have an angle and size different from the others, especially from the nearby kisses. At the same time, try to keep the distance between the kisses approximately the same.

After all the lips are done, let the illustration dry.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

The final touch is adding a layer of shadow.

This isn't mandatory, but it will make the design seem less simple, so let's go ahead and add it to each of the kisses.

Take a small round brush (size 1 or 2) and paint a shadow layer on each kiss in its corresponding color—crimson, tint of red or tint of magenta. Allow the painting to dry completely. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

I hope that you will like this lesson even though it's a simple one. It's a very fun project. When painting or otherwise creating, it is very important to enjoy the process.

Feel free to experiment with the colors. This project is a great chance to try creating and painting with many different shades of red, pink and magenta. Also, do not deny yourself the pleasure of playing with the placement of the pattern's elements. Look at figure 2 for one example of how you can mix up the painting.

As I have already mentioned in other lessons in this book, the value and peculiarity of patterns like this one is that they can become the basis for more varied and intricately designed objects.

Favorite Lipstick



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3
- Pencil
- Masking tape

Probably nearly every woman has lipstick in her purse. Why not use it as a source of inspiration? Lipsticks come in a wide variety of shades, from rich red to pastel pink. And lipstick tubes also come in every kind of style, from classic and discreet to the most incredibly shaped and extravagantly colored.

In this project, I'll show you how to paint a lipstick with watercolors and not only capture how it looks but also convey the mood that it brings—like passion or tenderness. Let's get started!

PROJECT COLORS



Red



Tint of
gray

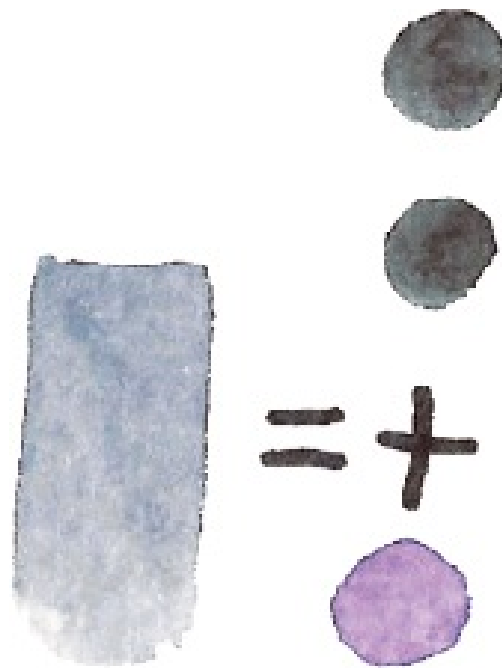


Crimson



Black

COLOR MIXING



Tint of gray

Before painting our lipstick, I want to share one interesting trick with you. As I said, we can convey a specific mood or emphasize some emotion through an illustration, and one way of doing so is through different types of lines.

Figure 1 shows three types of lines of the same color but painted using different techniques. The first line shows the on-wet technique, the second the on-dry technique and the third the dry-brush technique (read more about each technique [here](#) and [here](#)).

I believe that each of us has a unique perception of the world and that all three lines can cause different emotions and sensations in us. For me, on-wet lines convey lightness and tenderness, on-dry ones certainty and clarity, and dry-brush ones passion and strength. You can apply one of these tricks, or perhaps a number of different ones, to express and emphasize an emotion or specific mood. So as we go through the project,

I'll explain when you can apply each one.

Now, let's begin painting a fashionable illustration of a lipstick step-by-step.

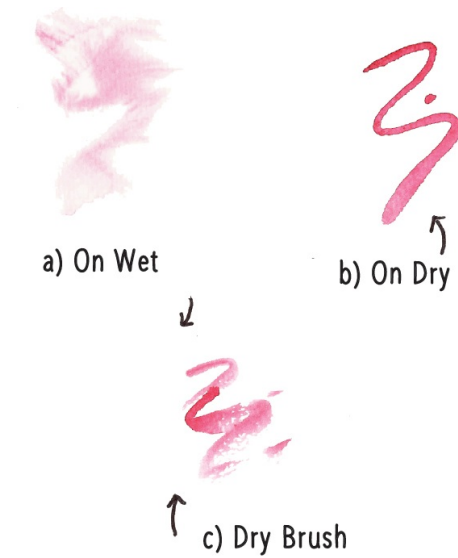


Figure 1

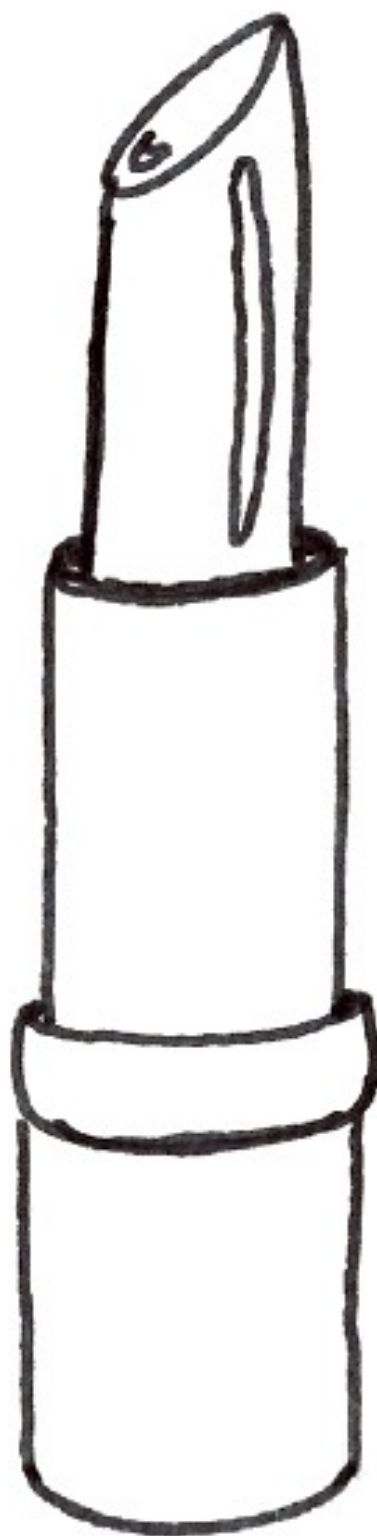
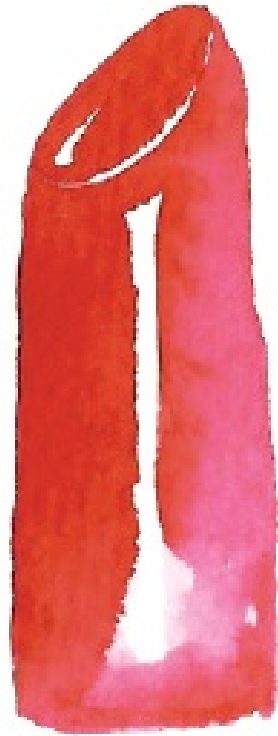


Figure 2

STEP 1



On
Dry



Step 1

Secure the paper to your table or board with masking tape. Draw a sketch of the lipstick with a pencil, as shown in figure 2.

The sketch doesn't need to be detailed or perfect, just mark the main lines. Now paint the base of the lipstick with red, as shown in the example. Use a size 3 brush with a thin tip and medium-consistency paint. Pay attention to how some areas are left without paint. With these areas, you'll be able to show light reflecting off the creamy lipstick. (Read more about reserving [here](#).)

Allow the layer to dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now, use a thin round brush (size 1 or 2) and the tint of gray to paint the lipstick tube as shown in the picture. The paint should be quite watery.

Allow the layer to dry completely.

STEP 3



On
Dry

Step 3

Now that the lipstick base is done, we can move on to adding shadows. For this step, we'll use the layering technique (read more about layering [here](#)). Take a small round brush (size 3) and paint a layer of crimson at the top of the lipstick and a layer of black at the bottom. The consistency of both paints should be medium.

Let the painted layer dry.



Figure 3

STEP 4



Step 4

Our stylish painting is almost finished. We just need to add a few finishing touches and characteristic lines to show some traces of the lipstick. You can be creative and choose from the techniques I described earlier or apply the ones I have chosen.

In my painting, I made some splatters with crimson, which I think look very bright. Then I moistened the paper with clean water and made a wavy vertical line with crimson, as shown in the example. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Allow the painting to dry completely.

I hope you enjoyed this project and that you will continue painting lipsticks with different colors and tube designs. Figure 3 shows a few examples of how this project can be put into practice to create bright and colorful illustrations.

Experiment with types of lines, extra lines, colors and shapes. When I was developing this project, I thought about how great it is that when painting fashion illustrations, we can make spurts and splatters with paint and the illustration will still look stylish and modern. Don't miss the opportunity to practice your creativity.

Cute Handbag



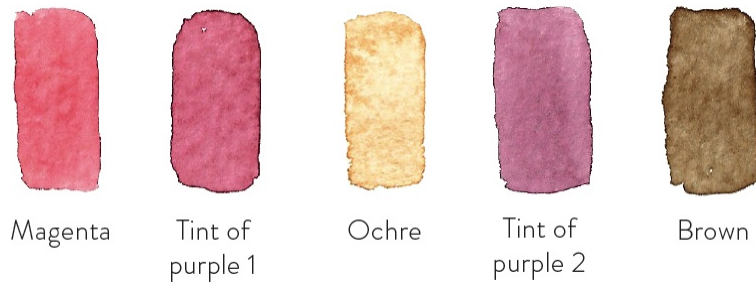
SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape

When I was a child, I liked to paint clothes and accessories, especially bags. I could spend hours painting out the details and creating styles. Imagine if you were a fashion designer and it was your job to create bag designs and paint sketches of them. Sounds exciting, doesn't it?

This step-by-step lesson will allow you to not only create a beautiful illustration but also understand the principles behind this type of painting. With them, it will be much easier to create your own unique bag designs.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

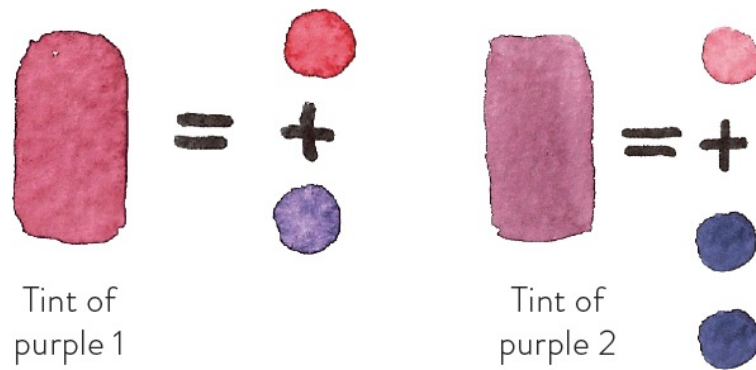
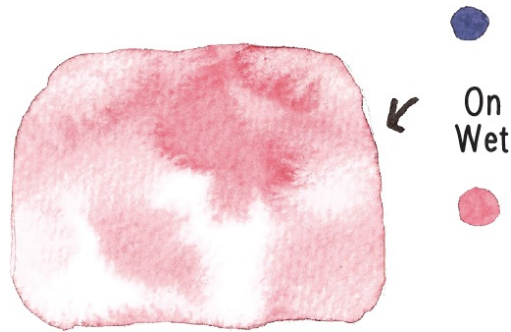


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Before you start painting, you need to make a preliminary pencil sketch on your watercolor paper following figure 1. I advise you draw only the main lines and leave out the details in your sketch.

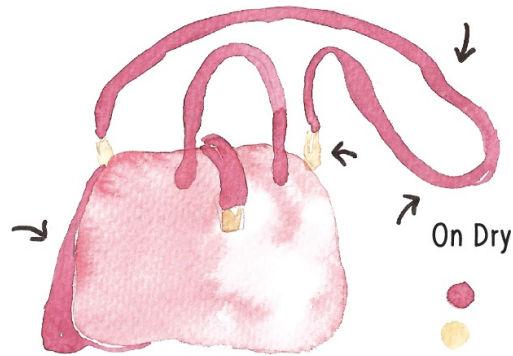
TIP: If you'd like to paint a bag of your own design, then think about the specific details and style in advance and sketch them separately on sketch or office paper. Then draw just the bag's outline on your watercolor paper.

Secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Wash the area of the bag with clean water, then add watery magenta to the wet paper with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5). Apply the paint by brushing it lightly on the surface of the paper. The paint will spread itself over the wet surface. However, do not fill the entire area with paint. Leave some areas unpainted. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Let the layer dry.

STEP 2



Step 2

Now, this first layer does not look at all like a bag. But this is part of watercolor painting: we add to our base layer step-by-step to finally obtain the desired effect.

So let's add more details. Paint with the tint of purple 1 the closure, side, shoulder strap and one of the two handles.

Use medium-consistency paint and a small round brush (size 1–3). Let the layer dry.

Next use the same brush to paint the gold-plated parts of the bag with ochre, as shown in the example. The consistency of the paint should be medium. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Allow the work to dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

For this step, use the same brush you used in step 2.

With a medium-consistency magenta, paint the shadows on the bag as shown in the example.

Now paint more shadows and the second handle with the tint of purple 2 (see the example). The consistency of the paint should be medium.

Allow the work to dry completely.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Now use a detail brush to paint dashed lines with the tint of purple 1 in a medium consistency.

Also, to make the work more interesting, add details to the gold-plated elements with a medium-consistency brown, as shown in the example.

The final touch is adding the decorative elements. Here you can show your creativity and add a variety of elements, like key chains, zippers, folds or stripes. You can also experiment with accenting different parts of the bag using different illustrative lines. Anything you want. But remember to maintain balance and not overload the painting.

Allow the work to dry completely.

Our illustration is finished! I hope this step-by-step guide helped you understand how to paint bags using watercolors. With its methods, you can paint different bags in a wide variety of shapes, colors and designs and experience being a real designer!

Figure 2 shows two examples of bag illustrations. I chose colors very similar to those used in the project, but the designs are different—a wristlet and a crossbody bag.

Think like a designer. Paint sketches with watercolors and don't be afraid to imagine and create a true masterpiece.

Wide-Brimmed Hat



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape (optional)

Hats are an integral part of any wardrobe, coming in all kinds of colors, styles and sizes. In this lesson, I will show you how to quickly paint a simple women's hat using watercolors. It really takes just a few easy steps. An illustration like this one can be part of a fashion look or part of a different kind of composition, but you can always apply the knowledge and skills you gain from this lesson.

The most important thing to remember is to have fun. Let's get to it!

PROJECT COLORS



Ochre



Brown



Tint of
purple



Dark brown

COLOR MIXING

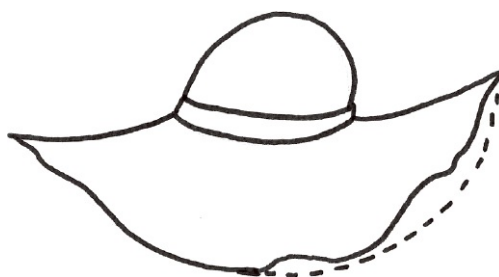


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

The most important part of painting a hat is choosing your model—that is, the shapes your hat will consist of. Roughly speaking, a hat can be divided into a crown—the upper part—and a brim—the lower part. So, pick up a pencil and follow figure 1 to sketch the outlines of the hat we'll create. If you're designing your own hat, you can also add other shapes that match your design.

We won't use a large amount of water in this project, so it is not necessary to secure the paper with masking tape, but you can if you like.

Fill the crown and brim of the hat with a watery ochre, leaving an unpainted area between them (see the example). Use a medium brush with a thin tip (size 4 or 5) for this step.

Without waiting for the painted layer to dry, go on to the next step.

STEP 2

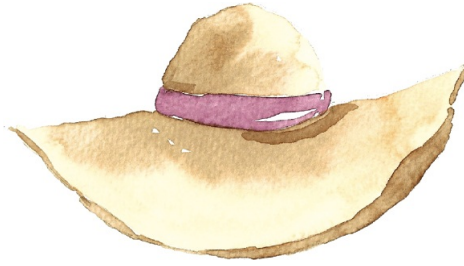


Step 2

Add medium-consistency brown to the wet layer as shown in the image of step 2. You only need a few touches of the brush to get the desired effect (read more about blending [here](#)). For this step, a small brush with a thin tip (size 1–3) will do nicely.

Let the work dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

Switch to a smaller round brush (size 1 or 2) and add a ribbon to the hat. It can be of any color. I chose a purple tint for my work, but you can select any color you prefer. The paint should be watery.

Allow the painted layer to dry.

Since many details will be added in the next step, it's not necessary to add a lot of shadows. Just apply a shade of dark brown under the ribbon and a little bit more under the brim. Use moderately thick paint. Adding shadows like these makes any work look much more realistic and lifelike. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Once again, let the painting dry.



STEP 4



Step 4

It's time for the final step—adding the intricate details. Here we will again use the layering technique with medium-consistency paint.

Take a detail brush and paint thin horizontal stripes to create the texture of the hat's material. You can also use this detailing approach to add a pattern to a fabric hat.

Next, add another layer of dark brown to the shadows to make them clearer. Also paint the ribbon with another layer of the color you chose for it earlier—the tint of purple in my case.

Allow the work to dry completely.

TIP: Adding details is a very creative stage and imprints the painter's character on the work. So show your creativity. Just consider before you add an element whether it will enhance the overall look of the painting or be superfluous.

Now our illustration is finished—I hope you enjoyed the lesson. Figure 2 shows three examples of how its methods can be used to create other types of hats. You can experiment with colors, hat styles, shapes and decorations. There are so many options for creating your own unique illustration. Picture yourself as a designer and enjoy the process!

Vintage Perfume Bottle



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1–3; medium 4 or 5
- Detail brush
- Pencil
- Masking tape
- Eraser (optional)

People often ask me where I look for inspiration. My answer: Inspiration comes from everywhere! There are so many interesting things around us if only we look with the right mindset. Boxes, cans, vases or bottles may appear boring at first, but inspiration truly is everywhere—you just have to look. Even your home can be inspiration: furniture, decor items and kitchen utensils can all be great subjects for watercolor painting.

In this project, we will paint something that I think just about all of you have: a bottle of perfume. Watercolors are a great medium for painting a glass vessel. Because of its transparency, it's easy to create a feeling of lightness and cleanliness while everything is still neat. Let's start!

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING

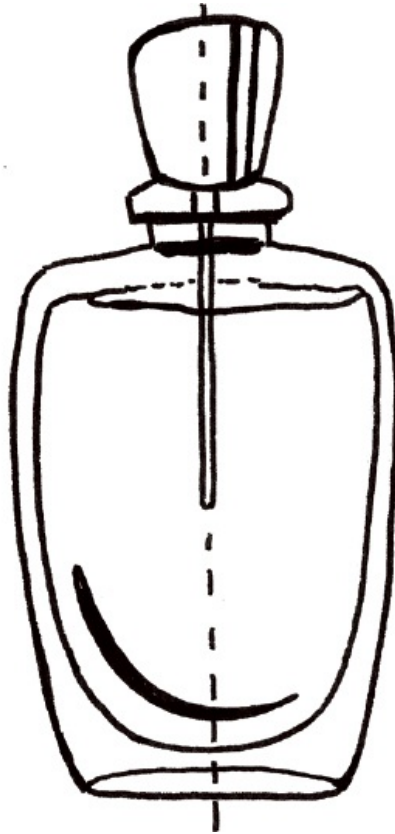
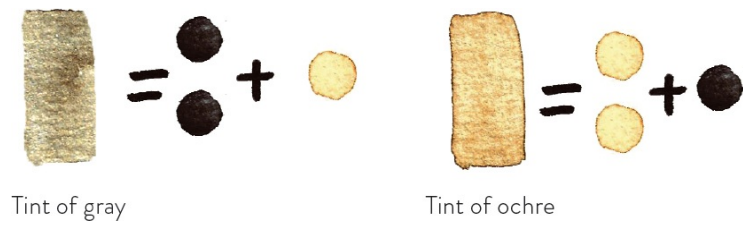


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Let's start work on the project with a quick sketch. I rarely make preliminary pencil sketches, but I think deciding whether to sketch depends on each person's artistic style. So, just in case, draw a light sketch with a pencil following figure 1.

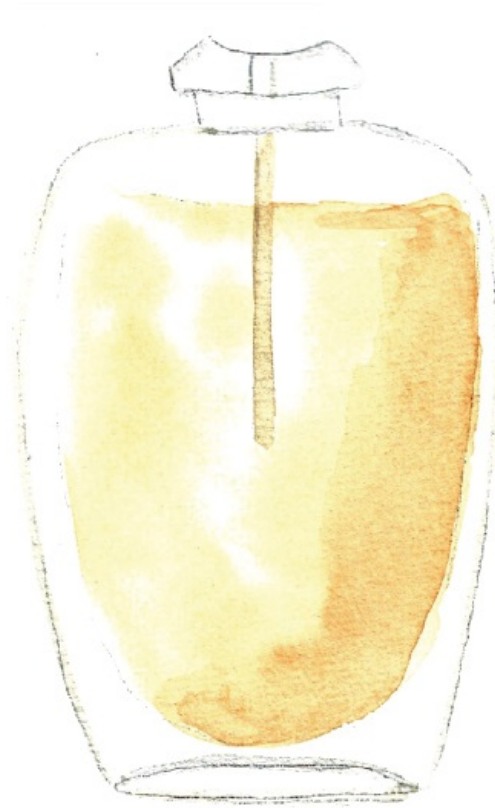
TIP: It is especially important with this project to make the pencil line almost invisible. I advise that after you finish the sketch, you go over the line with an eraser (or, better, a kneadable artist's eraser) and fade the pencil line.

Secure the paper to your work surface with masking tape.

Rinse the perfume area with clean water. Without waiting for it to dry, add a watery ochre with a medium round brush (size 4 or 5). To do this, gently touch the tip of the brush to the damp paper. You should get a very beautiful and transparent layer. (Read more about painting on wet [here](#).)

Let the work dry completely, then move on to the next step.

STEP 2



Step 2

Prepare a watery tint of gray and paint the glass perfume bottle and its spray tube as shown in the example. Use a small brush with a thin tip (size 1 or 2).

Now change to a medium round brush (size 4 or 5) and put a shadow on the layer of perfume with a medium-consistency ochre. The shadow should be added to one side only. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

To make the shadow softer, wash it with a clean, wet brush (read more about softening [here](#)).

Let the painting dry.

STEP 3



Step 3

Paint the cap of the perfume bottle using a medium round brush (size 4 or 5) and a watery black. Note that I left some unpainted stripes on the cap to depict the light reflecting off its metal. The borders of the strips should be neat to achieve this effect.

Now arm yourself with a small round brush (size 1–3), and add some free strokes over the perfume layer with medium-consistency ochre, as shown in the example.

After the painted elements are dry, go on to the fourth and final step.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

Our work is already recognizable, but the final details will give it character and complete it. We will use a detail brush for this step, and all the paints should be in a medium consistency.

Add a layer of black to the cap and make a few brush strokes on the bottle itself.

Now, using ochre and the tint of ochre, paint lines separating the perfume liquid from the glass bottle.

The final touch is a splatter of ochre. This is optional, but since I personally love the effect, I added it to this project.

Let the painting dry completely.

Using the principles and methods of this lesson, you can paint any kind of perfume bottle that you have at home or see in a store. Just simplify

its form and break down the bottle into simple parts so it is easier for you to paint.

It is not necessary to completely replicate the shape of my bottle, and your bottle should not be perfect. A few crooked lines make the illustration cute and give it charm. Also, experiment with colors while using black and gray as the base for your color schemes. As for the liquid itself, it can be any shade. With this basic guide, there are so many different perfume bottles you can paint!

High-Heeled Shoes



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 2 or 3; medium 4–6
- Pencil
- Masking tape (optional)

High-heeled shoes are often associated with femininity and allure. They come in a wide variety of patterns, designs and colors, and there are even designers who specialize in shoe design.

Since our project is meant to be a quick sketch, though, we'll paint these iconic shoes without an intricate design. In just three steps and 15 minutes, your illustration will be finished. I hope this project will inspire you to further develop your fashion illustration skills, but for now, let's start with the simplest skills.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING



What do you think is the most important part of designing a shoe painting? My answer is getting the correct proportions. If we distort the shoes' proportions, then the illustration will look unrealistic. So, in this lesson, I advise you make a preliminary pencil sketch following figure 1.

Draw as accurately as possible, but at the same time, try to keep the sketch simple and not make the lines too visible.

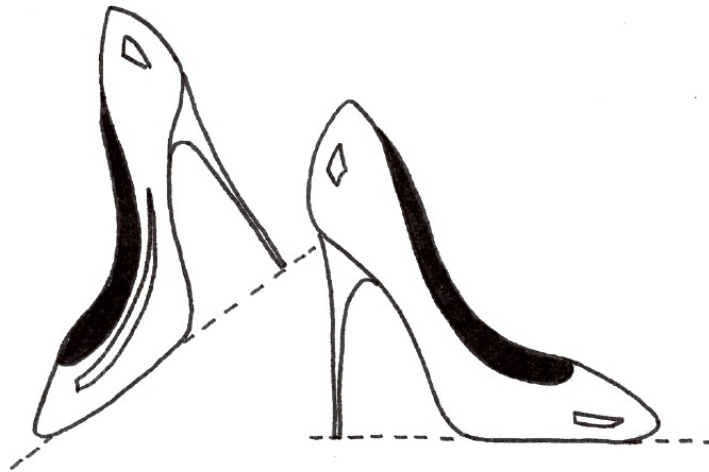


Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Prepare red in a medium consistency and paint the bases of the shoes with a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4–6). Note that inside both of the bases some areas are left unpainted to show the light reflecting off their surface. This is appropriate for shoes made of materials with some shine, like leather. (Read more about reserving [here](#).)

If your shoes are made of a material without any shine, you'll need to come up with other solutions. If, for example, your shoes are made of dull cloth, it is better not to leave any areas unpainted.

Allow the freshly painted layer to dry, then go to step 2.

STEP 2



Step 2

Paint two more shapes, following the image of step 2 as a guide, but this time use the tint of beige in a medium consistency. Keep working with the brush you used in the previous step.

After the shapes are filled with color, let the work dry completely.



Figure 2

STEP 3



Step 3

Change to a small round brush (size 2 or 3) and paint the heel and sole lines in black. The consistency of the paint should be medium. Allow the painting to dry completely.

The final touch is adding a layer of shadow. I do not think this step is

mandatory, but it does always add depth to the painting.

Prepare a medium-thick red and tint of beige. Now take a medium round brush with a thin tip (size 4 or 5) and paint a layer of shadow using the appropriate shades, as shown in the example. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Then allow the illustration to dry completely.

As you probably already noticed, I didn't splatter paint over this design, which I often do with fashion illustrations. The reason is that I wanted the illustration to focus primarily on the shoes' beautiful shape and proportions and to be more about color and texture. So I advise you concentrate on these points, at least at first. Of course, once you have more experience, you will be able to apply different creative techniques, including splattering.

Practice this lesson and have patience. Remember that fashion illustration is a rather complicated branch of design. I advise you repeat the project after finishing it for the first time, changing only the color of the base. Figure 2 is one example using this lesson's methods. Concentrate on achieving perfect forms and using the right proportions. In no time at all, you'll become a fashionista painter!

Girl in the Wind



SUPPLIES

- Watercolor paper
- Round brush sizes: small 1 or 2; medium 4–6; large 7 or 8
- Detail brush
- Flat brush: medium 4–6 (optional)
- Pencil
- Masking tape

Unless you specialize in painting people, it's never easy, especially not within 15 minutes. There are many nuances, like proportions and

anatomy. However, I wanted to at least briefly touch on the subject. So let's learn to paint a very sweet and romantic illustration of a girl in the wind with watercolors.

To simplify the painting and not get bogged down with the technicalities of proportion and nuances of anatomy, the girl will stand with her back toward us so that all we'll need to paint of her body is her neck and arms. The main focus of the work will be her luxurious hair flying in the wind and her clothing, making this painting very much a fashion illustration.

The instructions are laid out in simple steps so that the painting process will not cause you too many difficulties and you can enjoy every moment of it while still ending up with a beautiful painting.

PROJECT COLORS



COLOR MIXING





Figure 1

STEP 1



Step 1

Get started by creating a detailed sketch based on figure 1. In general, I am not a supporter of detailed preliminary outlines, but in this case, I

think it's appropriate. However, still try to make the lines thin and barely noticeable. When you're done, secure the paper with masking tape to your table or board.

Now let's get to work with our watercolors.

Use a round brush with a thin tip (size 4–6) and a medium-consistency brown to paint a base for the hair. Then use the tip of a small round brush (size 1 or 2) to paint individual strands of hair. Note that the farther the strands are from the head, the thinner they get.

Wait until everything is dry before moving on to step 2.

STEP 2



Step 2

Prepare a medium-consistency nude and paint the girl's arms and part of her back and neck (see figure 1). Any round, thin-tipped brush will work for this.

Wait until the freshly painted layer dries, and then, using a size 1 or 2 brush, paint her shirt's stripes with medium-consistency cobalt blue, as

shown in the example. Work carefully so that the illustration looks neat. This is very delicate work and requires your full attention.

Let the painting dry completely.

STEP 3



Step 3

It's time to paint the skirt. Mix a medium-consistency gray and paint the skirt following the example. To create the skirt shape, use a small round brush (size 1 or 2) for the belt and a flat brush (size 4–6) for the skirt's base. If you do not have a flat brush, use a large round brush (size 7 or 8) instead. When painting the skirt, try to hold the paper still and not make any unnecessary movements with the brush.

NOTE: If you use black paint instead of gray, add more water when mixing your pigment.



Figure 2

STEP 4



Step 4

The work is almost done. Just a few strokes left, and voilà! Use a detail brush and medium-consistency paint throughout this step.

Prepare the black, dark brown and cobalt blue paints. First, paint the skirt's folds in black, then paint individual hairs on the girl's hairline with dark brown. (Read more about layering [here](#).)

Remember that it is very important not to overdo the details. Add these small strokes gradually, step-by-step.

Let the paint dry completely.

The last part of this lesson is adding splatters. In my opinion, a few splatters of cobalt blue give the work a very magical atmosphere.

Let the painting dry completely.

Figure 2 depicts an illustration painted using this project's methods and techniques. I changed the colors of the clothes, but everything else was done by following this lesson.

This project proves that everyone can paint—and without any special materials or skills. Although it may take some time and practice, anyone can paint it!

SUPPLIES

WATERCOLOR PAPER

Let's start with watercolor paper. In my experience, watercolor paper is the most important material for watercolor painting. I always say that if you want to spend money on supplies, it's best to spend it on good quality watercolor paper.

There are two important things about paper you need to know: the types of paper and the weights of paper.

There are two most common types of watercolor paper: **cold pressed** and **hot pressed**. The difference between them is that hot-pressed paper is smoother and cold-pressed paper has more texture. Generally, hot-pressed paper is more suitable for detailed illustrations or paintings. I usually use cold-pressed paper and used it for the examples throughout this book because it's more suitable for loose, impressionistic illustrations. I love how watercolors work on it and how magical it looks when painted with watercolors.

I advise you buy both types and try them, but for the projects in this book, I recommend you use mainly cold-pressed paper.

The **weight** of watercolor paper is very important as well. It should be at least **300 gsm** so that it will not curve or wrinkle much when you add water.

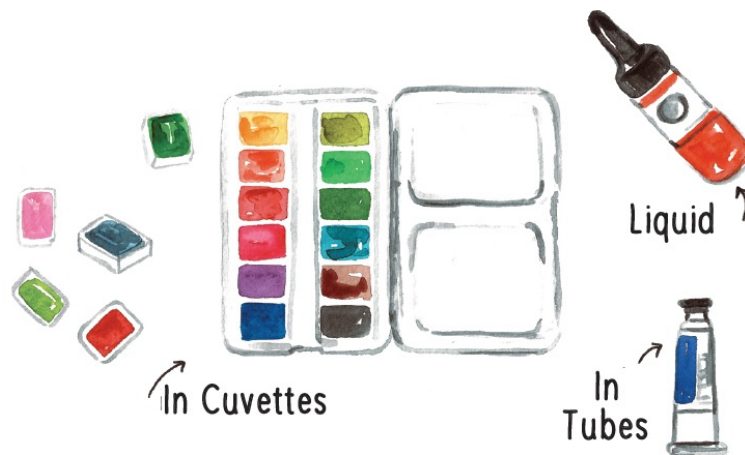
BRANDS OF PAPER

As far as brands of paper, I honestly don't think that brands are so important. Sometimes you can find nice quality paper that's not a trendy brand. I personally use watercolor paper from a local art shop because I am happy with the quality and the price.

Just remember these specifics for watercolor paper and try to explore different brands and types until you find one that you like best.

Listen to yourself and your feelings, and eventually you will find your own perfect paper.

TIP: If you want to try new paper, do not buy it in bulk until you have tried and tested it yourself and are happy with the results, even if the brand has good reviews.



WATERCOLOR PAINTS

Time to talk a little about watercolor paints. They come in a variety of forms, like tubes, cuvettes and even liquid. I advise you try each type and decide which one is best for you.

I personally like watercolors in tubes. I find them to be very concentrated, and I always get clean and vibrant colors from them. Moreover, you can buy just a few tubes and create your own set of watercolors with the basic colors and other colors you like and use the most.

BRANDS OF WATERCOLORS

There are a lot of brands of watercolors. But as with paper, I believe that a brand is a very personal choice. Use paints from a manufacturer that is

affordable for you. A set that's for professionals rather than students is best. It guarantees high-quality paint.

TIP: If you are working with watercolors in cuvettes, sprinkle the set with water before starting to work. This will make the watercolors softer and their pigment more vibrant.



PAINT BRUSHES

Many different brushes are suitable for working with watercolors. In order to make it easier for you to understand the variety, I've sorted

them into several types of classification. They're very rough, but I hope will be useful for you.

TYPES OF BRUSH CLASSIFICATION

- By hair material: synthetic, natural and mixed. Natural hair is softer than synthetic and usually consists of sable, squirrel or pony hair. Personally, I prefer synthetic.
- By type: round, detail, flat, liner, angle, mop, filbert and fan. (Read more about effectively using brushes [here](#).)
- By size: miniature, small, large and extra large. The exact size a brush is labeled as depends on its type as well as its brand.
- By quality: professional and student.

Always buy professional brushes if you can. As with other supplies, professional-grade brushes guarantee good quality.

CHOOSING BRUSHES

I have a lot of brushes, but to start painting and exploring with watercolors, you really need only two round watercolor brushes: a large one for painting large areas and a small one for painting details. **Make especially sure that your small brush has a fine tip so you can easily make thin lines and points.** If a small brush has a fine tip, it can be used instead of the brush for details. Brushes are expensive, thus I included only two in the essential set. These two brushes make up the **essential set** for beginners. **I recommended many other sizes in this book's projects, but all the projects can be done with just these two brushes.**

If you can afford to buy more brushes, then I advise you get the following: a few round ones in different sizes, a detail brush and one each of the flat, mop and angle brushes. With the essential set, they make an **advanced set** of brushes. If you have an advanced set, it will be easier for you to work with watercolors.

But my main advice is that there is no perfect recipe. Add whatever brushes you need to follow your own artistic inclinations and sensibilities.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

We have looked at the main supplies, so now we will consider additional materials, which are just as important.

- **Water container.** It can be a jar, glass or cup. Better yet, make sure your container is clear, which will let you see how clean the water is and when it's dirty enough to be changed. I advise using two jars of water—one full of clean water for diluting colors and mixing washes, and one for rinsing brushes in between colors. Change the water in this second jar whenever it becomes too dirty.
- **Paper towels.** You will need paper towels for cleaning your brushes and maybe also for removing water from your brush.
- **Pencil.** I use a simple #2 pencil (also called an HB pencil). When you make a sketch on your watercolor paper, remember to draw very lightly. Note, too, that you can't erase a pencil line covered by watercolor.
- **Eraser.** I personally love to use an art eraser, but you can use any eraser you have.
- **Masking tape.** You will need it to secure sheets of watercolor paper to your work surface. When your painting is done, you can easily remove it without damaging the paper.
- **Palette.** It can be porcelain or plastic, or if you're at home, you can use a white plate.
- **Paper for testing.** The reverse side of a sheet of used or damaged watercolor paper is very good for testing colors, making quick sketches or just checking that your brush is clean. You can also use just regular office paper.
- **Hair dryer.** To speed up drying wet painted layers, you can use a hair

dryer. I do not advise using a hair dryer often, though, only when there is a need for it and you're in a hurry.

- **Plastic wrap.** Some wonderful textures can be made with watercolors and plastic wrap from your kitchen.

OTHER MEDIA

Very often watercolors are used along with other materials. There is even a term for this kind of combination: “mixed media.” Some of this book's projects use **white gouache** or **white gel pen ink** along with watercolors.

Both gouache and gel pens are used to add white details to watercolor paintings. The only difference between them is that the pen can make it much easier to create small, precise elements. Of course, it's best to have both gouache and a pen, but if you can afford only one, I suggest that you buy gouache first since you can paint big objects as well as splatter with it.

TIPS AND ADVICE

INSPIRATION AND MOOD BOARDS

In this chapter, I'll elaborate on the topic of inspiration. Everyone can paint or make something creative, but not many do it daily. One reason is that they don't have enough inspiration. For a creative person it is very important to not only find inspiration but also keep it through days, weeks, months and years to be transformed into an artwork.

So, what is inspiration? In my opinion, it's a feeling inside you that helps or pushes you to create something beautiful.

If you are inspired, you want to create more and more. You enter your flow.

I want to share with you some things and practices I use to get inspired. Since we are all very different, they might not always work for you, but I am sure they will be of some use.

The first is a **mood board**. This is a physical representation of images you like and are inspired by. Your mood board can be arranged around:

- Mood and atmosphere
- Colors or color combinations
- Works by other illustrators and artists
- Some specific subject, like fruit

Essentially, it contains anything you feel you need to keep for current or future inspiration. If an image isn't something you can use right now, just save it for later.

The second is **sketching**. By "sketch" I mean anything you can quickly paint. I will explain more about sketching later in this chapter (see [here](#)).

The third is any activity not related to your creative process that **gives you a feeling of happiness**. It can be walking around, dancing, listening to music, cooking, watching a movie ... Anything you really like to do can help you get into a flow of inspiration.

Personally, I like going to the park, since I find nature to be abundant in inspiration. The colors, the shapes of the leaves—all of these things and more make me so happy. After walking, I want to paint and create to portray nature's beauty.

REFERENCES

I would like to touch on another very important point of painting with any medium, including watercolors: **references**. These are images that help you paint a particular object—the key word being “help,” not “copy.” The fact is that we are not always able to paint objects from just our memory or imagination, so it's useful to have sketches in your sketchbook that can help you with your final painting.

But what if the object that you need is nowhere to be seen? Or even if it is nearby, what if you need help to depict it accurately? This is where references come in. Thanks to them, you can explore an object's colors, textures, shape, specific features and more.

So where do you get these pictures?

The fastest way is using **the internet**. With the help of a search engine's image search or websites with specific image search tools, you can find all sorts of images. Just remember to respect the rights of the creators whose pictures you use. You cannot copy photos in your work, only draw inspiration from them as you create your own unique design.

Another way is taking **your own photos**. This is an excellent way to gather references, and I highly recommend it. Take photos in the park or just about anywhere else—your home, shops, markets. Capture with your phone camera everything that you think is beautiful, interesting or

unusual. All of these photos you can use as references. The biggest advantage of this method is that you are the creator of the photos and can copy all the details if you wish. The only drawbacks are that your own photos may not be detailed enough to paint from or that you simply may not have the desired object.

The last way I recommend is collecting **pictures from magazines and books**. As with pictures from the internet, you must respect the creators' rights over their works and not copy works you find. But you can explore these pictures and, for example, use a few specific features or color combinations.

Searching for references is very interesting and fun. As with any creative process, don't strain yourself. Try to enjoy it.

DAILY SKETCHBOOK PRACTICE

Earlier, I mentioned sketchbook practice as a way to get inspired. I want to explain it in more detail as, personally, I've found sketchbooks an excellent way to practice creatively. Here are some ways I use mine.

First of all, in a sketchbook you can capture something you would like to remember or use later. For example, if you notice a beautiful array of fruit in a shop and you want to paint it later, you can make a quick sketch of its **key features**.

If you want to paint some **idea** you have in mind before creating an original work, use a sketchbook. Since it's only a sketchbook, you don't need to focus on technique or details. You can use your ideas from the sketchbook later to create beautiful paintings in much more detail.

Another way is to use your sketchbook for **experiments**. If you want to paint something but have some doubts about how it will turn out, try it in your sketchbook first. You can also experiment with colors, shapes and compositions—anything that takes your fancy.

The last way I use a sketchbook is for **warm-up** painting sessions. I usually do a warm-up in the morning, after I wake up. So before I start my daily routine, I paint something, whatever I am feeling in that exact moment. Since my mind is free in the morning, I can show my true creativity. After this early session, I always feel good. It's like art therapy for me. Try doing a warm-up session in the morning or whenever you have time. I am sure you will be surprised at how nice it can be.

I have not been using sketchbooks for very long, maybe only a few years. But I am happy to share with you some tips and advice I've picked up.

First, there are a lot of types of sketchbooks. Make sure that your sketchbook is not expensive so that you can be messy in it without worrying about what you paid for it. But also make sure that your

sketchbook suits your purpose. For example, if you are going to try some watercolor techniques, it's better to buy a sketchbook with heavy watercolor paper. (It can be less than 300 gsm, but the weight should still be enough for a watercolor wash.)

Second, paint in your sketchbook daily, even if you don't have much time. It's enough to do 10 or 15 minutes every day. Paint in it as often as you can.

Also, paint in the morning, when your mind is freer.

Last, allow yourself to make mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes. Think of them as part of the creative process: they give you the chance to learn something and go on to create a work that's really cool and unique.

Practice in your sketchbook daily, and you will see how many opportunities you open up for yourself. You will start to feel confident, free and happy while painting.

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Thank you from the bottom of my heart to my followers. This journey was impossible without all of you. Your questions, kind words, messages make me happy every day and give me energy to do more amazing things.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Anna Koliadych was born in Ukraine. She received a technical education, and having independently studied the basics of design, she worked for international graphic design companies for over five years. She then emigrated to Malta, where she met her husband. With the support of her family, she left the design industry and began to study watercolor painting on her own. In 2017, she moved to London with her husband and began working as a freelance illustrator, successfully completing a large number of diverse projects, including illustrating two children's books and a cookbook. In 2018, Anna began to lead workshops in London, teaching beginners the art of watercolor. Since then, teaching has become an integral part of her life.

At present, Anna divides her time between London and Tallinn, Estonia. She continues to share her knowledge with people from all over the

world and additionally works on various interesting and beautiful projects.

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